

# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

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The aim of "The Russian Review" is to present a non-partisan interpretation of Russian history, civilization, and culture. The Review invites contributions by authors of divergent views, but the opinions expressed in any individual article in this journal are not necessarily those of the editors.

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## Sir Bernard Pares

BY MICHAEL KARPOVICH

THE passing away of Sir Bernard Pares is a great loss to Slavic scholarship. For many years he has been one of the outstanding interpreters of Russia and other Slavic countries in the Anglo-Saxon world.

His main interest lay in the field of Russian history, and he made important and lasting contributions to the literature on the subject. To this day, his *History of Russia* remains the best one-volume account available in English, and the number of editions in which it has appeared testifies to its well-deserved popularity. *Russia and Reform*, published in 1907, offers a detailed and highly-informative treatment of Russian political developments leading up to the revolution of 1905, while the later monograph on *The Fall of the Russian Monarchy* is a definitive study of the political crisis which culminated in the collapse of the Imperial régime. All of Sir Bernard's historical works are marked by thorough scholarship as well as by that sympathetic understanding which was the result of the author's intimate contact with Russia and the Russians. They are notable also for their highly individual style which retains a somewhat conversational character even in formal historical narrative.

As a young man, Sir Bernard lived and studied in Russia. He returned to Russia during the political crisis of 1905, and in the years that followed, he made several visits to the country to watch the growth of the recently born constitutional régime. In the First World War he was with the Russian Army as a semi-official British observer, and after 1917 he continued his travels in Russia, braving the dangers of the revolutionary turmoil so long as this was possible. The extent of his personal contacts in Russia was amazing. He knew Tsarist ministers and revolutionary leaders, businessmen and intellectuals, peasants and landed gentlemen, and long was the list of his Russian friends to whom he was simply "Bernard Ivanovich." He recorded his Russian experiences in several volumes of memoirs which form a valuable addition to his scholarly works in the field of Russian history.

By temperament and inclination, Sir Bernard was not exclusively, or even primarily, a research scholar. There was in him a strong missionary urge, a feeling that it was his duty to spread the knowl-

edge and understanding of the Slavic world in the Anglo-Saxon countries. Hence the amount of time and energy that he gave to educational activities, in the broadest sense of the word. He was one of the pioneers in the teaching of Slavic subjects in English universities. He was the actual founder and the first director of the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies. To his inspiration and guidance was due the appearance of such periodicals as *The Russian Review* (London) and, after it was discontinued, *The Slavonic and East European Review*. An ardent admirer of Russian literature, he translated (in verse) the fables of Krylov and Griboedov's famous comedy *Woe from Wit*.

Sir Bernard was not only a cultural but also a political missionary. Perhaps the greatest dream of his life was the achievement of a lasting Anglo-Russian understanding. He began his study of Russia at a time when the tradition of mutual hostility and distrust still was strong in both countries. He did what he could to help to get rid of this unfortunate historical legacy, and he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907. In the subsequent years, his principal task was to strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries. He took an active part in arranging a visit to England of the members of the Russian Duma, and a return visit to Russia of a British parliamentary delegation. It was on this last occasion that I first saw and heard Sir Bernard. I was then (1912) a student at the University of Moscow and attended the reception which the University gave to the distinguished foreign guests. To us, the students, it was an opportunity to express our enthusiasm for parliamentary government, and we accorded the British delegation a rousing welcome. Several of its members spoke to us in English, and Mackenzie Wallace and Sir Bernard (then still Mr. Bernard Pares), in excellent Russian. A decade or so later, I met Sir Bernard in London, and we exchanged reminiscences of that day in Moscow. In between lay the First World War and the Russian Revolution. I was an exile from my native country, and for the time being access to Russia was denied Sir Bernard too. I could not help noticing how acutely he felt this loss of immediate contact with Russia.

I am convinced that this was the psychological background for Sir Bernard's subsequent change of attitude with regard to the new régime in Russia. He finally was permitted to visit the country, and upon his return to England he published a book (*Moscow Admits a Critic*) that somewhat surprised many of his friends,

English and Russian alike, by the much more conciliatory tone in which he now spoke of the Soviet government. With the outbreak of the war, and particularly since the day when Hitler's attack upon Russia made her an ally of the Western powers, this new attitude naturally was strengthened. It was expressed in a number of writings and public pronouncements in which Sir Bernard pictured the Soviet government as undergoing a profound transformation, both with regard to its domestic and foreign policies. He saw in the Soviet Constitution of 1936 a sign of the régime's impending democratization, he pictured Stalin as a former revolutionary internationalist turned a national leader, he firmly expected Russia to cooperate with her war-time allies in the work of post-war reconstruction, and he defended Soviet foreign policy as one of national security.

I did not agree with these views at the time Sir Bernard first expressed them, neither do I agree with them now. But I think I can see how he arrived at them. All his life he was in love with Russia, and he continued to love Russia through all the vagaries of her tragic fate. Love gives insight, but at times it also can dim one's judgment. And then there was that life-long devotion to the cause of Anglo-Russian friendship which Sir Bernard would find it very hard to abandon, and which, perhaps, he was too impatient to see realized and secured.

To those who had the privilege of knowing Sir Bernard, he will remain an unforgettable figure. A true ascetic in his daily life and habits, totally oblivious of personal comfort and social conventions, a perfect example of the proverbial "absent-minded professor," he had a generous, warm-hearted, and responsive nature. Frail in body, he was a man of indomitable spirit. Aged and ailing, he continued his labors, writing and teaching, to the very end of his long and fruitful life.

# Postwar Trends in the U.S.S.R.

By N. S. Timasheff

TWICE, in the course of the thirty years which have passed since the success of a revolution carried out in the name of Marxism, did Russia, in Soviet garb, approximate the Communist blueprint, first around 1920 and second in the early thirties. Both times the promoters of Communism had to retreat.<sup>1</sup> Of these retreats, only the second one is now of interest. It started in 1934, not in the course of the war, as often erroneously assumed. Not war, but its anticipation by the men in the Kremlin was its cause. Reluctantly, they understood that efforts to embody pure Marxism had created acute social tensions and that these tensions had to be weakened, lest in the course of a war the whole order, including their power position, should collapse. This determined the direction of the retreat. Concessions were made, but not to liberal ideas. To the contrary, political dictatorship, government monopoly of economics, and managed culture, these three pillars of Communist rule, were maintained. Concessions were made to some popular aspirations repressed by pure Communism. They led away from its cosmopolitan and antihistorical ingredient toward national and historical values. These concessions were supplemented by concessions dictated by the perception of the ineffectiveness of some purely Communistic methods; these were put aside and replaced by devices to which the people were used and the return of which they liked.

Events proved that the plan was correct. The army and the people behind it resisted the German attack much better than expected by many. Since the plan worked, its application was amplified, by making additional concessions of the same kind. But in the course of the war another process set in: the people themselves began to extort from the government some liberties. Some men of letters and of science allowed themselves the liberty of expressing ideas they held true, independently of the desires of the government; composers started producing music they believed best; here and there, enterprising men used the situation to enrich themselves, contrary to the precepts of Communism and far beyond the modest concessions granted by the government.

<sup>1</sup>For a complete analysis of the movements toward Communism and away from it see N. S. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat*, N. Y., 1946.

When hostilities came to an end, different possibilities were ingrained in the situation. The Kremlin group could have used the situation to liberalize the structure relying on the enormous authority acquired by a victorious administration. There are reasons to believe that this was expected by many and that the frustration of this expectation has resulted in the accumulation of much bitterness among Soviet citizens.<sup>2</sup> The Kremlin group could have chosen to cancel all the concessions made since 1934, in other words, to return to the pattern of pure Communism. Finally, it could have chosen a policy of consolidation of the hybrid order resulting from the merger of some elements of Marxism with the renascence of part of Russia's historical tradition; this implied the elimination of those liberties which had been surreptitiously conquered by the people in the course of the war, when the government could not be vigilant enough and did not dare to antagonize the cultural elite. Out of these possibilities, the men in the Kremlin have chosen the third. This can be demonstrated by passing in review the individual phases of social activity.

Regarding the political phase, no doubt is possible. In the political setup of the country, no change occurred during the years preceding the war, during the war, or after the war. In the course of the war, the Soviet government did not even ponder the plan of a "national coalition" which prevailed among many belligerent states; the one-party system firmly established since the early days of the Communist régime made this almost impossible. Throughout the war and after, the system continued being justified by reference to capitalist encirclement making impossible the withering away of the state as forecast by the founding fathers of Marxism.

The real cause of the persistence of dictatorship is, however, quite different. It is the same which made dictatorship necessary since the very day of the Communist Revolution, namely, strong antagonism between the government and the governed. These facts are illuminating: shortly before the end of the war, the Kremlin group again insisted that true democracy could be found only in the Soviet Union, in contradistinction to fake-democratic institutions of the West. Many of these statements have been primarily addressed to the latter, but not all. Thus for instance, on the occasion of the Press Day (May 5, 1948), *Pravda* extolled Soviet democracy and the true freedom of the Soviet press "which is the

<sup>2</sup>Innumerable articles published, in Russian, in various newspapers and magazines (some of them mimeographed) could be used as evidence.

press of the whole nation," in contrast to the bourgeois press which is "a weapon of deception, an instrument for the enslavement of the people." Exactly as it had done shortly before the war, the government ordered restored—on paper—the democratic structure of the collective farms violated by arbitrary appointment and dismissal of their chairmen by local party committees or local Soviets.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, there is no doubt that the dictatorship's most potent weapon, the security police and the slave labor camps under its management, are still there as they were before the war. Nobody knows how many inmates there are, but very definitely the figure goes up into the millions.<sup>4</sup> Contrary to the views of some authors, these camps do not fulfill any reasonable economic function, but are primarily instruments of terrorism, a machinery built to deter and eventually kill the enemies of the state, after having extorted from them the residue of their vital energy.

It is noteworthy that, after the war, the men in the Kremlin have started strengthening the political structure by symbolically tying it with the reviving past. On March 15, 1946, the council of People's Commissars has been replaced by the Council of Ministers. Since that day, Stalin carries exactly the same title as the Tsarist statesmen, such as Count Witte or Stolypin. He who knows the formidable "revolutionary energy" which Lenin believed to be inherent in titles invented by Trotsky will understand the scope of the retreat from pure Communism carried out since 1934. Of somewhat smaller importance was the substitution of the terms Soviet Army and Navy for "Red Army" and "Red Navy" ordered in the fall of 1946.<sup>5</sup> In this case, revolutionary symbols have also been dropped, but in favor of rather neutral ones.

In the field of economics, important departures from the Communist blueprint were made prior to the war, such as differential remuneration for different kinds of work, permission to till small plots individually, and to possess some cattle in the midst of collective farms, the abandonment of food rationing, and so on. It is noteworthy that, in the course of the war, no attempts were made

<sup>3</sup>*Pravda*, September 20, 1946.

<sup>4</sup>Very high estimates are given by D. Dallin and B. Nicolaevsky, *Forced Labor in the Soviet Union*, New Haven, 1947. Against these estimates see N. S. Timasheff, "The Postwar Population of the Soviet Union," *American Journal of Sociology*, September, 1948, and E. Kulisher "The Russian Population Enigma," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1949.

<sup>5</sup>*New York Times*, September 21, 1946.

to return to purely Communist patterns, though, in democracies, devices of the socialist type were often used. Most conspicuous was the management of the food problem. The government restored rationing and guaranteed to everybody a minimum of food at low prices; but it allowed this minimum to be supplemented by purchases on the free market where prices were determined by the purely capitalistic law of supply and demand. On December 14, 1947, food rationing was again abolished. Simultaneously, by means of a currency reform tantamount to the confiscation of a large part of the earnings of "war profiteers," the government strived for the closing of the gap between the two price levels.<sup>6</sup> These measures were conspicuously dictatorial, but very little, if anything, of pure Communism could be detected in them.

After the war, the government enacted two measures increasing the distance of the economic system of the Soviet Union from the ideal of pure Communism. On October 9, 1946, a decree restored cooperative trade in cities abolished in 1935. Soviet cooperatives are under government control so that the reform does not mean very much. But, it is noteworthy that, restoring cooperatives, the government emphasized competition as a mighty device for the improvement of the economic system. On August 29, 1948, another decree granted the Soviet citizens the right to buy or build for themselves houses which they could own and transmit, without limitation, to their progeny or other persons designated in their last wills.

The very necessity of taking these measures proves the survival of the people's opposition to purely Communist economics and their persistent desire to have "free trade"—this is the Russian term standing approximately for that which, in this country, is called free enterprise. The persistence of the spirit of free enterprise is furthermore implicitly recognized in the decree of January 9, 1948, directed against exploitation of home workers under the disguise of producers' cooperatives. More specifically, it is directed against ambitious men who organized "private basement factories," paid home workers low wages for work allegedly performed by themselves on the account of cooperatives, and collected huge bonuses for over-fulfilment of production norms. The system strikingly resembles the "sweating system" which, about the turn of the century, existed in London and other manufacturing centers and aroused indignation among friends of labor.

<sup>6</sup>On the currency reform see B. Alexandrov, "Soviet Currency Reform," *Russian Review*, vol. 8 No. 1.

Profiteering is, however, not confined to producers' cooperatives. Consumers' cooperatives seem also to have been invaded by "doubtful elements" using them for personal profit. "The disposition to live at the expense of others has still survived," recently said *Pravda*. The same is true of collective farms whose members evade working on collective fields and prefer tilling their individual plots and raising privately owned cattle; *Pravda* has characterized these trends as "survival of private property tendencies."<sup>7</sup>

With these survivals, the men in the Kremlin continue struggling as they did before the war. In the collective farms, they have resumed checking the illegal extension of the individual plots which they had started in 1939, but discontinued in 1940. They have directed the local authorities to rescind innumerable but illegal transactions alienating land belonging to the collective farms. They have ordered an end to be put to the squandering of work-days, i.e., of units on which the remuneration of collective farmers depends and the enforcing of the regulations on the minimum number of days which each collective farmer is obliged to spend working on collective fields. All these measures are in Communist spirit; but their aim is to restore a situation the departure from which was never contemplated by the government.

The retreat from Communism has resulted in the formation of social classes. Recent visitors to Russia emphasize the crystallization of patterns of deferential behavior in relations between subordinates and their superiors and the symbolization of social differences in the size of offices and office desks, as well as in different kinds of clothes worn by members of various groups.<sup>8</sup> The extension of uniforms upon additional groups and the enactment of an old-fashioned disciplinary code for the army<sup>9</sup> emphasize the trend. And the instrument of making the differences hereditary, namely the abolition of free education in the higher grades of high school and in institutions of higher learning (decree of October 2, 1940) has not been abandoned.

Let us now pass in review the three pillars of traditional society—the family, the school, and the church. Early attempts to abolish the first and the third and to make the second an instrument of revolution instead of an instrument of education were undone in the course of the prewar years. Relating to the family, the trend has

<sup>7</sup>*Pravda*, June 17, 1948.

<sup>8</sup>John Fischer, *Why They Behave Like Russians*, New York, 1947, pp. 90 ff.

<sup>9</sup>*Krasnaya Zvezda*, June 19, 1946.

been accentuated by the decree of July 8, 1944, which made divorce almost impossible and granted monetary and honorific awards to mothers of large families. Now additional pressure is exerted on certain groups to deny them even the residual freedom of divorce left over by the decree.<sup>10</sup> Relating to the school, a conspicuous step toward the past has been the abolition of coeducation, begun in 1943. As to religion, change has been spectacular. The permission to elect a Patriarch (September, 1943); to resume the formal training of priests and to publish religious literature (Fall of 1943); the convocation of a National Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, with participation of high dignitaries of other Orthodox Churches (January-February, 1945); the permission to resume the ringing of church bells, the granting to the parishes of the right to own property necessary to the fulfilment of their functions; the imposition, on local authorities, of the obligation to help the parishes repair the church buildings (August, 1945), when contrasted with the trials of church dignitaries and the blasphemous propaganda of the late thirties, speak for themselves.<sup>11</sup>

After the war, there has been no conspicuous change in the situation. In April, 1948, the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* emphasized the desirability of making the marriage ceremony as attractive as possible and denounced the tendency of the registration offices to be satisfied with the stamping of marriage documents. In November, 1947, subsidies to mothers of three or more children were cut by half—a step probably indicating that the birth rate had returned to a sufficiently high level, but hardly pointing to any change in the government's attitude toward the family. As to the school, the anti-Western trend of our day—to be discussed below—has been reflected in some change in programs increasing hours to be spent on things Russian and decreasing those devoted to things foreign.

No further concessions to religion have been granted. But the new Patriarch has been awarded one of the highest Soviet decorations, and the Russian Orthodox Church was helped by the government to reannex the Uniates, a group of Eastern Christians, since the sixteenth century under the jurisdiction of Rome. In July, 1948, the 500th anniversary of the independency (autocephaly) of the

<sup>10</sup>R. Magidoff, *In Anger and Pity*, New York, 1949, p. 133.

<sup>11</sup>On the development of religious affairs after 1945 see my paper "Russia" in H. Leiper (editor), *Christianity Today*, New York, 1947.

Russian Church was celebrated in Moscow.<sup>12</sup> High church dignitaries from other Orthodox churches were again invited and participated in a conference on major problems of church politics. At this occasion, the dominance of ultra-conservative trends among the Russian church leaders became apparent. They rejected the idea of changing the old church calendar at variance with the one used by the rest of Christians; they posed impossible conditions for the recognition of the orders of the Anglican Church—a question which had preoccupied Russian theologians since the beginning of the century; and they reaffirmed their vehement anti-Catholic position. It is interesting to note that the ultra-conservative attitude was displayed with the implicit approval of the government whose representative attended the ceremonies and underlined the great significance of the conference both for the Russian and the other Orthodox Churches. This must be confronted with the fact that, in the twenties, the government had supported the Living Church, a revolutionary group within the Orthodox Church aiming at a reformation compared with which "Luther's reform would appear as a child's play."<sup>13</sup>

In the course of the war and after, high officials and Soviet papers have many times declared that religion was a detrimental institution to be gradually eradicated from the Russian scene. One of the latest has been the statement by Mikhailov, secretary general in the Young Communist League, at a congress held in Moscow to March and April 1949.<sup>14</sup> The League, he said, cannot be neutral of religion which is in direct contradiction to science. The members of the League are under the obligation of propagating the truths of natural science. Are not such statements foreshadowing new persecutions, in other words, an involution of the great retreat in religious affairs? By no means, because similar statements were made during the years when cordial relations between the government and the Russian Church were being established. To understand their significance one ought to compare them with genuine antireligious propaganda, style 1930-38.

In no field thus far reviewed could symptoms of return to pure Communism be discovered. Have not, however, the scientific and esthetic endeavors of the Russians been brought back to the state which obtained when Communist principles were paramount?

<sup>12</sup>A complete account of the conference has been published in Russian, in *Vestnik Moskovskoy Patriarkhii*, 1948 (special issue).

<sup>13</sup>N. S. Timasheff, *Religion in Soviet Russia*, 1942, p. 31.

<sup>14</sup>Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 30, 1949.

In the realm of science, recent condemnation of whole schools of thought has aroused much attention throughout the world. Most interesting has been the Varga affair.<sup>15</sup> Toward the end of the war, E. Varga, an outstanding economist of Western training, member of the Soviet Academy of Science, was entrusted by the Communist Party to investigate the impact of the war on capitalist economics and to forecast their further development. Varga wrote a book destined for private circulation only among the members of the Party. Some of his findings, however, were published by him in *World Economics and World Politics*, a journal of which he was the editor. His conclusions were entirely at variance with the expectations of those who committed him with the task. He asserted that, at least for ten years, there was no necessity for an economic conflict between the Soviet Union and the major capitalist countries; that, up to 1955, an economic depression in the latter was improbable; that war had proven the ability of capitalist states to engage in successful planning; that the state of the labor class had improved; and that one could not identify the great democracies with great monopolies and trusts.

In June, 1947, these views were discussed at a meeting of the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Science and found heretical. Varga courageously refused to recant, but expressed his willingness to acknowledge minor errors. He was supported by some of his disciples. To appease those in power, he published an article in which he declared that depression in the United States was possible. Nevertheless, he was demoted from his position and the journal edited by him was discontinued. Since then, attacks on Varga and his followers have been continuous—and still some of his disciples have persisted contending that Varga was right—though he himself finally recanted.<sup>16</sup> Vehemently opposing Varga's views, the government was not moved by the decision to fully restore the Communist pattern: at no time did they allow any doubt on the inevitability of crisis in capitalistic economy and of the *final* showdown with Soviet economics. The word *final* must be underlined because, before the war, during the war and after the war, Stalin has many times asserted the possibility of peaceful coexistence of the two major economic systems.

<sup>15</sup>An excellent analysis of the Varga affair has been made by F. Barghoorn, "The Varga Discussion and its Significance," *American Slavic and Eastern European Review*, Fall 1949.

<sup>16</sup>New York Times, April 28, 1949.

Another major occurrence was the Lysenko affair which brought to a dramatic conclusion a struggle in biology begun in 1936.<sup>17</sup> The point at issue was whether acquired characteristics could or could not be transmitted by heredity. The common view of the biologists is that they cannot; but Lysenko, an ambitious Soviet biologist, asserted that they can—under his direction. The discussion was interrupted by the war. It was renewed in August, 1947, when Professor Zhebrak, president of the Belorussian Academy of Science, was attacked for having published in *Science*, an American magazine, an "antipatriotic article." It is noteworthy that Zhebrak's article was written in refutation of an earlier article which had appeared in the same magazine asserting the enslavement of Soviet science. "Science can be free in a socialist state," proudly rejoined Zhebrak and pointed to his opposition to Lysenko, despite the latter's support on the part of the government. "Zhebrak adopted the views of the enemies," now said the Soviet papers; "thus he demonstrated that he was blinded by contemptible subservience to bourgeois science."

As in the Varga affair, the initial skirmish did not stop opposition. The latter attacked a foolish statement of Lysenko who had denied the struggle for life within a species. A public meeting was convoked by the Department of Biology of the University of Moscow. It was attended by 1,000 persons. Professors of Dialectical Materialism came to Lysenko's rescue; nevertheless, the scientific inanity of his position was clearly demonstrated, and the administration of the university started pondering whether they should not appoint new men to the Department of Philosophy. At this occasion it was disclosed that, despite Lysenko endorsement by high authorities, it was not his theory that was taught in Soviet Universities, but that of his opponents.

The real storm took place in August, 1948. The problem was brought to the forum of the Soviet Academy of Agriculture. The main address was delivered by Lysenko. He declared that his paper had been submitted to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and approved by it. This was decisive: the Academy declared that the only progressive and materialistic theory was that of Lysenko, while that of his opponents was reactionary and idealistic. One of the academicians said that from now on, nobody would even

<sup>17</sup>A complete analysis of the struggle in biology has been made (in Russian) by S. M. Schwarz in *Sotsialisticheski Vestnik*, 1948, No. 8-9. The earlier stages are also related by T. Dobshanski, *Journal of Heredity*, August 1947.

debate the question with representatives of ideas alien to Soviet science. A few days later, the presidium of the Academy dismissed two outstanding biologists of the anti-Lysenko trend and abolished the laboratories headed by them. About the same time, Zhebrak declared that he could no longer insist on his views since the opposite ones had been approved by the Party. Zhebrak did not display heroism. But the story reflects remarkable firmness of many Soviet scholars. This was a good instance of the libertarian trend of the war years. Checking this trend and imposing their own doctrine was the Party's task. In this imposition, no return to any specifically Communist pattern may be seen, since the doctrine is the same one which had been chosen by the Party in 1936.

Lysenko's victory will be reflected in a new Soviet Encyclopedia. Announcing this, *Pravda* asserted that bourgeois scientists were chained to the cart of monopoly and were forced to distort the results of scientific investigation, to refuse rational explanations of new facts and relapse into mysticism and idealism.<sup>18</sup>

Out of many other scientific affairs, one in the realm of Philology deserves some attention.<sup>19</sup> In 1946, Professor V. Vinogradov published a monumental treatise entitled *The Russian Language*. According to expert opinion, this is an excellent work. About the end of 1947, it was attacked because the author had emphasized foreign influences on the Russian language, often quoted foreign philologists and dared to say that, in some regards, the Russian language was less advanced than some other European languages. This was declared to be subservience to everything foreign, "a sickness widespread among Russian intellectuals." The question was discussed at an open meeting convoked by the Department of Philology of the University of Moscow. Before a large audience, Vinogradov's colleagues and students expressed their solidarity with, and appreciation of, his work. Thus, the libertarian tendency was once again manifested. Surprisingly, no reports about "organizational consequences"—this is the official term designating demotions, dismissals and so on—are available.

To the imposition of official truth in the realm of science, there corresponds the imposition of an official style in literature, the theater, music, and other arts. The story begins in July, 1946, when Soviet opera, theater, painting, movies, and architecture were criticized and condemned for their inability to move with the

<sup>18</sup>*Pravda*, March 26, 1949.

<sup>19</sup>On this affair see V. Alexandrova, in *Novoye Russkoye Slovo*, January 11, 1948.

times. Two obscure Communists, Yegolin and Lebedev, found that a significant number of plays were mediocre, that not a single good Russian opera on modern themes had been composed, that films did not comply with the ideological demands of the epoch and that technically they were unbelievably poor. Such complaints had been frequent before the war.<sup>20</sup> A new and symptomatic trait was, however, an outright attack on foreign plays "permeated with an ideology foreign to Soviet society" and void of any criticism of bourgeois civilization.

One month later, a decisive blow was inflicted on literature. The Central Committee of the Communist Party severely criticized two magazines published in Leningrad, discontinued one of them—since there was not enough good material for two publications,—and ostracized two authors, Zoshchenko and Akhmatova. Some what later, A. Zhdanov delivered a report on the state of literature, expanding and commenting upon the decree of the Central Committee.<sup>21</sup>

The main criticism was this: the authors and magazines under attack offered the Soviet public writing void of Soviet ideology and imbued with the spirit of worship of everything foreign, consequently bourgeois. The main directive was: Russian literature cannot have any interests outside those of the Soviet peoples and the Soviet state; it must describe the process of socialist reconstruction and help to advance it. In K. Simonov's words, Soviet authors must stress the ideological and human superiority of the Soviet people brought up by the Soviet system.<sup>22</sup> This was declared to be "genuine Socialist realism," i.e., the style imposed on literature in the thirties. Once again, no workable definition of this "realism" did appear. "We must show the Soviet man as he really is, and simultaneously as he ought to be," wrote Fadeyev, the new head of the Union of Soviet Authors appointed after the dismissal of Tikhonov found guilty of tolerance toward "anti-Soviet trends" in Soviet literature. Fadeyev seems to understand that the task of simultaneously describing the Soviet man as he is and as he ought to be is insoluble. As a good dialectician, he solves the question by a simple affirmation: "Indeed, it can be done, and this is the very essence of Soviet realism."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Kultura i Zhizn*, July 17, 1946.

<sup>21</sup> The decision of the Central Committee was published in *Kultura i Zhizn* August, 1946; Zhdanov's report in *Pravda*, September 21, 1946.

<sup>22</sup> *Pravda*, November 22, 1946.

<sup>23</sup> A. Fadeyev, "Tasks of Literary Criticism" in *Problems of Socialist Realism* (in Russian), Moscow, 1948, pp. 10 and 12.

that good films that been ever, ology geois The two em- as, — some- ture, Com- under and ently have Soviet help tress ought alist Once "We as he Soviet eyev bing good "In- n."  
Zhizn m (in

There followed lengthy quotations from Balzac showing that he knew the art of combining realism with romanticism. A similar combination is, it seems, implicitly expected from Soviet authors.

The blow on literature was followed by another, inflicted on the theater, so important in Russian life. The Central Committee ordered a sweeping purge of domestic and foreign plays preaching bourgeois ideology and thus poisoning the conscience of Soviet people. The theaters were ordered to concentrate on contemporary Soviet repertoire; at this occasion, the fact was divulged that, in reality, this repertoire played only a negligible part. This confession can only be explained by the irresistible aversion of Soviet audiences to plays written in the official style.<sup>24</sup>

A further blow was inflicted on the film industry. This industry was consistently scolded for technical backwardness, as well as for the tendency of featuring only a very small number of actors and actresses. A special article was devoted to the second part of *Ivan the Terrible*, produced by Eisenstein, but never released. The famous producer was accused of having entirely distorted historical facts by presenting Ivan as a maniac and a scoundrel, while, in reality, he was a progressive statesman. In another article, Eisenstein's contribution to the periodical *Cinema Art* was severely criticized as profoundly erroneous, formalistic, advocating art for art's sake.<sup>25</sup> These facts are of great interest as revealing the general pattern of the attack on art in its different forms. Eisenstein had expressed ideas in which he believed and interpreted Ivan the Terrible according to his artistic consciousness. This was an impermissible expression of the libertarian trend of the war years. So, Eisenstein had to be brought to order and given to understand that the pre-war trend, rehabilitation of Russia's past and anti-formalism, was not discontinued.

The blow on music fell in 1948. On February, "the musical world, in Russia and outside, was startled by a ferocious attack on the three leading Soviet composers, D. Shostakovich, S. Prokofieff and A. Khatchaturian, and a few minor ones, among them Muradeli. It was a deliberate and well planned action since the event which gave the start had taken place three months earlier. On the thirtieth anniversary of the Communist Revolution (November 7, 1947), Muradeli's opera *Great Friendship* was performed at the Bolshoi

<sup>24</sup>Kultura i Zhizn, July 17, 1946; Pravda, September 2, 1946.

<sup>25</sup>Kultura i Zhizn, July 7, 1946; Izvestia, September 22, 1946; Kultura i Zhizn January 2, 1946.

Theater. Stalin attended, and disliked it. The result was a decision of the Central Committee of the Party which, with direct reference to the anti-formalistic campaign of 1936, scolded the composers for their persistence in formalism," denying the main principles of classic music, indulging in atonality, and displaying a tendency for muddled combinations of sounds transforming music into cacophony. . . . In this way, the composers had departed from the demands of the Soviet people and have closed themselves in narrow circles of specialists."

Once again, emphasis was laid on subservience to the West "whose music reflects the decay of bourgeois civilization." There followed conferences of Soviet composers gratefully acknowledging the salutary lesson given them by the Central Committee, recantations, repeated attacks and additional recantations. What was, actually, the sin of those under attack? Obviously this: in the course of the war, they took the liberty of composing according to their musical conscience, independently of the Party directives. After the war, the men in the Kremlin became aware of the unfolding of the libertarian trend and ordered the composers to return to the style imposed on them in 1936. This trend again cannot be taken as signifying return to Communism; the style imposed in 1949 was characteristic of the years of the Great Retreat, not of the years of the Communist Experiment. The only difference with the late thirties is the addition of the anti-Western tendency.

Most varied fields of activity have been scrutinized by the men in the Kremlin and found to be contaminated. In September, 1948, the *Krokodil*, which is the main satirical magazine of the Soviet Union, was severely scolded by the Central Committee and ordered to concentrate on combating the vestiges of capitalism in the consciousness of the people and on criticizing the bourgeois culture of the West. In January, 1949, seven outstanding theatrical critics were rebuked for "estheticism, antipatriotism, and cosmopolitanism" expressed in their low evaluation of Soviet plays as compared with classic plays. In March, 1949, Soviet circuses were blamed for cosmopolitanism and formalism. Simultaneously, sport writers were accused of attempts to implant foreign manners and tastes among athletes, especially "individualism and careerism." Workers' clubs were denounced for offering to their public nothing but Western dances.<sup>26</sup> The purity of the Russian language was also checked.

<sup>26</sup>*Kultura i Zhizn*, September 11, 1948; *Pravda*, January 28, 1949; *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo*, March 5, 1949.

Grave errors were found, among them the fact that almost all Russian hotels carried foreign names (e.g., Astoria). "We must stop this insult to the Russian people," said *Izvestia*.<sup>27</sup>

The climax, however, was reached in the decision to ascribe to the Russians all great inventions ever made—the steam engine, the locomotive, electrical light, the radio, penicillin, and the airplane. A certain S. Altschuler was taken to task because he had asserted that penicillin had been discovered by Fleming, "while everybody knows that it was done by three Soviet scientists, Polotebnov, Manassein, and Gukovsky." The readers of *Komsomolskaya Pravda* were informed that in July, 1882, a monoplane propelled by three steam engines designed by a Russian scientist was flown by the Russian pilot Golubev. Photostats from Russian papers of the year were produced;—what they really proved could not be checked by the present writer.<sup>28</sup>

Such morbid nationalism is the very antithesis of Communist cosmopolitanism. A new formula had to be devised and was easily found. "Nationalism and xenophobia," observed Salisbury, "are carefully glossed over by the simple device of bundling all Western thought into one package and label—bourgeois."<sup>29</sup>

Why has the tendency of extolling Russia's past degenerated into anti-Westernism? First of all, because of social inertia. The line which led from the cosmopolitanism of the Communist Experiment to the limited nationalism of the Great Retreat was projected up to a level where the value of anything foreign was denied. Secondly, the anti-Western tendency has probably been one of the responses of the men in the Kremlin to the danger created by the contact of millions of Russian soldiers with the West. In one of his speeches, Malenkov said that the worship of the West was politically dangerous since the agents of international reaction tried to use men contaminated by this attitude to weaken the Soviet state. And one Soviet critic told Drew Middleton that, although in the past some Western plays were produced to exhibit to the Soviet people the weakness of Western society, this was no longer sagacious since even the decadence and soft life of some characters might be attractive to the hard working Russians.<sup>30</sup>

The degeneracy of nationalism into ferocious xenophobia is the

<sup>27</sup>*Izvestia*, July 6, 1948.

<sup>28</sup>*Komsomolskaya Pravda*, January 9, 1949.

<sup>29</sup>H. Salisbury, *New York Times Magazine*, December 26, 1948.

<sup>30</sup>*New York Times*, September 8, 1946.

most important difference between the prewar and the postwar Soviet Union. In addition, in certain fields, especially in economics and religion, some prewar concessions have been accentuated. In no field has the movement been toward pure Communism abandoned in 1934. What is erroneously considered to signify such a return is in reality a series of actions curbing the libertarian trend which, contrary to the will of the rulers, had in some places pierced the crust of dictatorship. For the future, the persistence of this trend is of the highest importance for Russia and the world at large.

# From Pushkin's Lyrics

Translated from the Russian

BY BORIS BRASOL

IT has been often and justly observed that Pushkin is to the Russians what Goethe is to the Germans, what Shakespeare is to the English—the incarnation of their national ideal. This year on the 150th anniversary of Pushkin's birth (May 26, 1799, old style) this fact is recognized not only by the Russians, but, in a large measure, by the world in general.

There is an ever-growing appreciation of his genius, and he is universally acknowledged as the master-builder of the immensely rich, colorful, and ductile Russian literary language.

The words which he spoke about Zhukovsky, another gifted poet, could equally serve as an *envoi* to Pushkin's own creations:

His verses' captivating fascination  
Through centuries will stand the jealous test,  
Youth, hearing them, will sigh for Fame's elation,  
And silent Grief in them will find its rest,  
And mirthful Joy will pause in meditation.

But while Shakespeare and Byron, Schiller and Goethe, Cervantes and Dante have become intrinsic elements and organic parts of Western tradition and culture, the recognition of Pushkin and his place among the immortals of all lands and of all ages is still confined, outside of Russia, to the professional *literati* who, having read him in Russian, know that, as Maurice Baring, the eminent English critic put it, "it is impossible to admire a poet more, or to think of anyone who has ever written better." The reason for this is primarily to be sought in the fact that the translations of Pushkin's poetical works are few and mostly inadequate, failing to convey to the foreign reader the exquisite charm, the metrical and musical properties, the crystal fluency and unfading fragrance of his verse.

The 150th anniversary of Pushkin's birth, which is being marked in every civilized country, has rekindled the zeal of his translators, and the English versions of some of his lyrical pieces appearing below are a humble tribute to the great Russian poet and his lucid genius.

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## THE CONFIDANT

Of thy laments and shrifts amazing  
 I seized each sound that thou hast wrung,  
 Of passions riotous and blazing,  
 Indeed, enchanting is the tongue.  
 Yet, end those tales; with circumspection  
 Conceal thy dreams—they are thine own;  
 I fear their fiery infection,  
 I dread to learn what thou hast known!

## GIFT OF CHANCE, SO VAIN AND USELESS

May 26, 1828

Gift of chance, so vain and useless,  
 Life, why wast thou given me?  
 Why has fate, ill-starred and ruthless,  
 Doomed my days and smitten me?

What were those repugnant powers  
 That have fashioned me from dust?  
 Why these doubts in gloomy hours?  
 Why is soul engulfed in lust?

I can see no aim before me,  
 Mind is vacant, void my heart,  
 Life's unvaried noises bore me,  
 Anguish tears my soul apart.

## ADJURATION

If it be true that late at night,  
 When living creatures are quiescent,  
 And on the tomb-stones fainting light  
 Falls gliding from the distant crescent;  
 If it be true that in that wee  
 The silent graves become deserted,—  
 Leila's shadow disconcerted  
 I call: "Come, friend, I wait for thee!"

1828

Oh, come. Do come belovéd shade,  
As thou appeared before we parted,—  
A pale, a cold and wintry maid,  
Pain-smitten, sad, and brokenhearted.  
Come as a distant twinkling star,  
As some faint sound or emanation,  
Or evil ghost of incantation,—  
No matter: Come, from near or far!

I call thee, friend, not that I might  
Avenge thy death or sadly ponder  
About men's mean and wicked spite,  
Or probe the mysteries of yonder,  
And not because, at times, dismay  
And doubts my heart tormented fill,  
But just to tell that I love still,  
That still I'm thine: Come, friend, I pray!

#### I HAVE OUTLIVED MY ASPIRATIONS

I have outlived my aspirations,  
My dreams no longer do I bless;  
Nought's left to me but sad vexations—  
The fruits of void and heart's distress.

'Mid storms of fate, so harsh and dreary,  
My blooming crown did swiftly blight,  
I live secluded mournful, weary,  
And wait: Shall death relieve my plight?

So in late autumn's chill and shiver,  
When tempests roar with no relief,  
One sees on barren branches quiver  
A lonely and retarded leaf.

## TOKENS

(To A. A. Olenina)

I drove to you, and lively dreams  
In mirthful crowds 'hind me were flying,  
And on my right moon's silver beams  
My sprightly journey were espying.

I drove from you . . . oh, other dreams . . .  
With pain was fused my adoration,  
And on my left, moon's mournful beams  
Were shining void of animation.

It seems to be the poet's part  
Never from dreams to be awoken,  
And thus some superstitious token  
Accords with senses of the heart.

# The Problem of Constantinople and the Straits

BY SAMUEL KUCHEROV

## I

THE problem of Constantinople and the Straits had for Russia two main aspects: Constantinople as the source of the religion and culture of the Russian people, and Constantinople as the commanding point to the Straits, to those "keys to our house" as they were characterized by Alexander I. A third aspect was tightly interlocked with the first two: it was the problem of the Slavs in the Balkans under Turkish domination.

Together with the Greek religion there also came from Constantinople to Russia the canon law, the alphabet, art in the form of architecture and icon painting, and, finally, the Byzantine way of life, which had a profound effect upon the mentality and mode of life of the Russian people.

When Constantinople fell under the blows of the Turks in 1453, Russia was in the process of freeing herself from the Tartar yoke. Tsar Ivan III, who completed this task, married Sophia (Zoe) Paleologa, niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, who brought with her to Moscow not only the customs and splendor of the Byzantine Empire, but also the idea of autocracy. The double-headed eagle flew from Constantinople to Moscow and was included in the arms of the Grand Prince of Muscovy, who took the title of Tsar (Caesar). Thus Ivan and the subsequent Tsars assumed the rôle of the successors of the Byzantine Empire<sup>1</sup> and of the champions of the Orthodox church and the Slavic peoples.

The problem of the Straits was born automatically as soon as Russia gained a strong foothold on the Black Sea. Since that time this sea was no longer "a beautiful virgin in the harem of the Sultan," as it was celebrated by Turkish poets, but it became also a Russian sea, the "keys" to which were in foreign hands. Established

<sup>1</sup>The idea of the succession to the Byzantine Empire found its formulation in the message of the monk Philophei to the Grand Prince Vasily Ivanovich, in which Muscovy was called "The Third Rome" (after Rome and Constantinople). . . "and a Fourth there will never be."

on the shores of the Black Sea, Russia naturally felt the necessity to circulate freely on it and out of it. Moreover, as long as the entrance to the Black Sea was controlled by a foreign power, Russia was constantly exposed to the danger of an invasion from the south.

Thus, in order to secure a free passage for her fleet and close the Straits to foreign men-of-war, and as a paladin of the oppressed Slavs, Russia waged against Turkey in the period from the beginning of the eighteenth century to 1914, eleven wars, which lasted together over thirty years. Only twice was she allied with Turkey: in 1798 and 1833. However, as soon as Russia grew into a Black Sea power, France and England opposed with all means at their disposal the free passage of her fleet into the Mediterranean. With regard to the Straits it was the policy of these powers to bring to nought the fruits of Russian victories over Turkey in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. France paralyzed the effect of the Treaty of Bucharest of 1739. Nicholas I had to stop at Adrianople in 1829 on his way to Constantinople for fear of English intervention. The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, advantageous for Russia, was destroyed by the Convention of London of 1841, according to which the Straits remained closed to all fleets, including Russia's. The Crimean War, disastrous for Russia, resulted in the neutralization and demilitarization of the Black Sea and the Straits; i.e., Russia had no right to maintain a fleet or fortifications in this area, whereas the fleets of the Great Powers enjoyed free passage through the Straits. (In 1871, however, the situation of 1841 was restored.) Then, the success of San Stefano was drastically reduced by the Treaty of Berlin of 1878. Finally, the diplomatic offensives of Russia in the problem of the Straits in 1908 and 1911 were brought to a failure.

Thus Russia's aspirations in the problem of Constantinople and the Straits remained unfulfilled up to the First World War.

## II

The Russian official policy toward Turkey during World War I went through two phases. At the beginning of the war Russia and her allies tried to prevent Turkey from joining the Central Powers. They did not know that Turkey, mistrusting Russia, had already concluded on August 2, 1914, a secret alliance treaty with Germany. Officially, Turkey entered the war only on October 19, 1914, using the period between those dates to mobilize and prepare her forces.

After Turkey had definitively embraced the cause of the Central

Powers, Russia's policy of aiming at the acquisition of Constantinople and the Straits received a clear formulation by the government as well as by public opinion through the voice of prominent political leaders and scholars.

That change becomes evident when the tenor of the Russian manifestoes concerning the war with Germany and Austria-Hungary is compared with that of the manifestoes issued when Turkey joined the war. In the manifesto concerning Germany it was said: "Now we have to intercede for an unjustly offended country related to us . . ." as well as "to protect the honor, the dignity, the integrity of Russia and her position among the Great Powers."<sup>2</sup>

Idealistic reasons were even more emphasized in the Manifesto related to the war with Austria-Hungary, in which the Emperor declared: "God sees that we resorted to arms not as the result of a warlike spirit, and not for the sake of a vain earthly fame, but we fight for a just cause, defending the dignity and the security of Our Empire, preserved by God."<sup>3</sup>

Also Rodzyanko, the President of the Duma, in his official speech on August 8, 1914, emphasized that Russia did not want the war, that desires of conquest were foreign to the Russian people, that fate itself had drawn Russia into the war.

Quite another tone prevailed in the official declaration and speeches concerning the conflict with Turkey. In the manifesto to the Russian people announcing the war with Turkey, we read: "Near is the solution of the problems on the shores of the Black Sea, which were bequeathed to us by Our ancestors."<sup>4</sup>

The same war aims are brought forward by Rodzyanko in the session of the Duma on January 27, 1915. He said: ". . . With the cross on its chest and in its heart the Russian people will conscientiously fulfill the Imperial desire and will open to Russia the ways to the solution of the problems on the shores of the Black Sea . . . which were bequeathed to her by the ancestors."<sup>5</sup>

Turkey's participation in the war on the side of Russia's enemies provided Russia with a definite and palpable war aim. Somewhat embarrassing were the declarations given before as to the absence of desires "of conquest," but the harmonization of the declarations

<sup>2</sup>E. H. Adamov. *Konstantinopol i prolivy* (Constantinople and the Straits). Collection of Documents. Moscow, 1925, I, 88.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

was achieved by the explanation that control over the Straits was necessary only as a matter of security for Russia's independence. To this effect Professor Prince Eugene Trubetskoy wrote in 1915:

Russia fights for the independence of all European countries threatened by German conquest and domination. May then this war lead to the securing of Russia's own independence. Indeed, the problem of the Straits is put now only as a question of Russia's independence. It is perfectly obvious that to neutralize the Straits means to create for us a complete dependency economic and political, on Germany.<sup>6</sup>

The problem of Constantinople was clearly formulated and presented from the point of view of Russian policy by P. N. Milyukov:

The participation of Turkey in the war on the side of our enemies has made it possible to put on the order of the day the solution of the age-old problem of our policy in the Near East. The acquisition in complete possession of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles together with Constantinople, and of a sufficient part of the adjacent shores to insure the defense of the Straits, must be the aim of this policy for the time being.<sup>7</sup>

Professor E. Trubetskoy emphasizes the national and cultural side of the problem:

Among the problems brought forward by this war the problem of Constantinople has for Russia a special interest and importance. We are brought to it by all the aspects of our life. It is for us a question of our daily bread, of all our political power, and of our cultural mission; the spiritual essence of Russia is involved in this problem. The Cathedral of Sophia is precisely that pearl of the Gospel for which Russia must be prepared to give everything she possesses.<sup>8</sup>

And the Marxist Professor M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky deals with the economic aspect of the question:

The historical aspiration of Russia for the opening of a free exit from the Black Sea promises this time to be crowned with full success. This will open a broad prospect for the economic development of our entire South. It is just in that direction that Russia can acquire a sufficient compensation for all the great sacrifices she has endured in this unbelievably hard war.<sup>9</sup>

Russia did not lose much time in presenting her demands to her

<sup>6</sup>Quoted by Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>7</sup>P. N. Milyukov in *Chego zhdet Rossiya ot voiny* (What Does Russia Expect from the War?), Petrograd, 1915, p. 57.

<sup>8</sup>Prince E. N. Trubetskoy: *Natsionalnyi vopros* (The National Question), Petrograd, 1915, p. 97.

<sup>9</sup>M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky in *Chego zhdet Rossiya ot voiny* (What Does Russia Expect from the War?), Petrograd, 1915, p. 23.

allies in the case of victory. It was the Tsar himself who initiated the diplomatic barrage. Already on November 21, 1914, the Tsar invited the French Ambassador Paléologue to Tsarskoye Selo and talked to him about the conditions of the future peace after victory.

Having expressed in advance his consent to everything that France and Great Britain may claim for themselves, the Tsar outlined his own desires as follows: "Turkey must be expelled from Europe, Constantinople must become a neutralized city under international control. The Enos-Midia Line should be the border between Russia and Bulgaria." But on March 3, 1915, on the occasion of the reception given to the French General Peau, the Tsar said to Paléologue: "The city of Constantinople and South Thrace must be incorporated into my Empire. I will accept, however, a special régime for the control of the city and the protection of foreign interests."<sup>10</sup> Thus no longer neutralization but incorporation into the Empire was demanded.

In the meantime the diplomatic machinery worked at full speed. Between Sazonov and Grey, through Benkendorff, and between Sazonov and Delcassé, through Izvolsky, the question was debated in all details. France and Great Britain were trying to limit Russia's aspirations, but without success. Russia had already endured great losses in Eastern Prussia for the common cause, and it was difficult to deny to the saviors of Paris the concessions which Russia's public opinion demanded so insistently.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Russia was so profoundly affected by the defeat of Tannenberg that rumors of a separate peace between Russia and the Central Powers had to be taken into consideration by the Allies.

Russia's aspirations were definitely expressed in the memorandum of March 4, 1915, delivered to the Ambassadors of Great Britain and France in Petrograd. In this memorandum Russia demanded that Constantinople, the Western Shores of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles, as well as South Thrace up to the Enos-Midia Line, should be included in the Russian Empire. Further, with regard to strategic necessity, a part of the Asiatic Shore in the region between the Bosphorus, the Zakaria River, and a point to be defined later on the shore of Ismid Bay, the islands of the

<sup>10</sup>M. Paléologue. *La Russie Tsariste pendant la Grande Guerre*, Paris, 1921-22, Vol. I, pp. 199 and 314.

<sup>11</sup>See the session of the Duma of February 10, 1915, in which Sazonov was assailed by representatives of almost all parties with demands referring to Constantinople and the Straits.

Marmora Sea, and the Islands of Imbros and Tenedos<sup>12</sup> should also be included in the Russian Empire. It was stressed in the memorandum that the development of recent events had brought Emperor Nicholas to the conclusion that the problem of Constantinople and the Straits had to be resolved definitely and in accordance with the age-old aspirations of Russia. Finally, the assurance was made that special interests of France and Great Britain on the territories mentioned above would be observed carefully, and that the Allied governments would meet with the same sympathy on the part of the Imperial government with regard to the fulfillment of their plans which might arise in respect to other territories of the Ottoman Empire or in other places.

It appears then that the official demand was made in accordance with the same principles which were outlined by P. N. Milyukov in his article mentioned above.

The consent of the British government was expressed in the memorandum of March 12, 1915, in the following words:

In case the war is brought to a successful end, and the desires of Great Britain and France in regard to the Ottoman Empire, as well as in regard to other places, are fulfilled as it is indicated in the Russian memorandum mentioned below, the Government of His Majesty will give its consent to the content of the Memorandum of the Imperial Government concerning Constantinople and the Straits, the text of which was communicated to His Majesty's Ambassador by His Excellency Mr. Sazonov on March 4, of this year.<sup>13</sup>

This memorandum was accompanied by another one, in which the British government explained at length that Great Britain's consent to Russia's aspirations represented a complete reversal of the traditional English policy in the question of Constantinople and the Straits, and thus the greatest proof of real friendship Great Britain was able to give Russia.

France's acquiescence was given in a verbal statement later, on April 10, 1915,<sup>14</sup> after some diplomatic delay. Its content was the same as that of Great Britain, and the statement was not accompanied by any explanatory document.

Italy adhered to the agreement concerning Constantinople and the Straits on December 2, 1916, with reservations of the same character as those of Great Britain and France, namely: 1) vic-

<sup>12</sup>The Islands of Lemnos and Samothrace were passed over in this note and added later.

<sup>13</sup>Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 274. (Document No. LXXVI).

<sup>14</sup>Adamov, p. 295 (Document No. XCIX).

torious war carried out to the end, 2) realization of her aspirations in the East and elsewhere, and 3) participation in privileges accorded by Russia to the other two Allies.<sup>15</sup>

In that manner the Imperial government had secured for Russia the possession of Constantinople and the Straits with a sufficient hinterland, and thus the realization of secular aspirations, in the case of a victorious end of the war.

The agreement had to remain secret for the time being. However, Milyukov in his speech of March 24, 1916, in the Duma, on the occasion of the discussions concerning the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said:

In what consists, strictly speaking, our interest in the war? . . . We need an outlet to a free sea. We entered this war not with that purpose. But since we began the war, we cannot end it without this achievement. Our Russian interest in this war consists in the necessary incorporation of the Straits. . . . The beginning of April, 1915,<sup>16</sup> is a date which deserves to be familiar to our broad masses in order that they may know for what cause they are fighting. That is the date of a concrete agreement concerning the Straits, concluded with our allies.<sup>17</sup>

At that time, however, the Minister of Foreign Affairs denied the existence of such an agreement. Only later, at the end of 1916, the tottering Tsarist government resorted to the announcement of the agreement in the hope of raising the fighting spirit of the country, and regaining popularity. The President of the Council of Ministers, A. F. Trepov, in the session of the Duma of November 19, 1916, made known to the Duma the content of the agreement. But it passed almost unnoticed by the public. Russia was too much occupied with her internal situation. Russia was giving birth to the revolution, which began three months later.

### III

The March Revolution had put at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the man to whose heart the problem of Constantinople and the Straits was the closest. Milyukov's dramatic fight for the keeping in force of the agreement of March, 1915, lasted for the six weeks that he remained in office and was directed essentially against the left-wing members of the Provisional government and the Petrograd Soviet.

<sup>15</sup>Adamov, p. 355 (Document No. CXVI).

<sup>16</sup>Milyukov was wrong: beginning of March and not of April, 1915.

<sup>17</sup>Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 412, footnote 2.

His appointment to the leadership of the Russian foreign policy Milyukov announced with the circular telegram of March 17, 1917, which declared: "In the field of foreign policy . . . the Cabinet will respect invariably all the international commitments assumed by the fallen régime."

This telegram was, however, thought insufficient, and the following telegram was sent on March 8:

The obligation of the new Russian government to keep the international treaties, expressed in the telegram of March 4, applies naturally also to all the agreements concluded with the Allies during the present war. It would consequently be also desirable that the Allies confirm the obligations resulting from all the previous agreements with Russia.<sup>18</sup>

On March 19, 1917, A. F. Kerensky, a member of the Cabinet and representative of the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers Deputies, had a conversation with the English Military Agent in Petrograd, General Knox, and with the press correspondent Williams, to whom he expressed the opinion that Russia should fight to the victorious end but without any aims of conquest. The opinion of Kerensky was that Russia does not need the possession of the Straits, but only the right to free navigation through them, which could be guaranteed in the best way by internationalization of the Straits.<sup>19</sup>

This conversation was published by the *Daily Chronicle* in the form of an interview, and caused in England a real sensation, since it came from a member of the Russian government.

It is interesting to note that the press attributed the words of Kerensky to Milyukov. This was communicated to Milyukov by K. D. Nabokov, who after the death of Benckendorff became Chargé d'Affaires in London. Milyukov, in turn, gave an interview to the foreign press declaring that Russia did not reduce her demands in any way.

However, the President of the Council of Ministers, Prince G. E. Lvov, published on April 9, 1917, the following proclamation of the Provisional government:

. . . The Provisional government considers it as its duty and its right to declare now that the aim of free Russia is not to dominate other nations, not to deprive them of their national property, not to seize foreign territories, but to strengthen a stable peace based on self-determination of peoples.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>19</sup>Sir Alfred Knox. *With the Russian Army, 1914-1918*, II, 576-7.

<sup>20</sup>Adamov, pp. 476-7 (Document CCCIX).

Also the keeping of all obligations towards the Allies was assured in this proclamation.

Milyukov, continuing the fight for the Straits, interpreted this last declaration in the sense that Russia was ready to fulfill her obligations toward the Allies, while the Allies similarly had to fulfill their commitments toward Russia.

This point of view was expressed in a circular telegram of Milyukov to Izvolsky in Paris, and Nabokov in London. In the telegram, Milyukov formally denied the information published by the French and English press, explaining individual declarations of certain members of the government in the sense that Russia intended to renounce the agreement concerning Constantinople and the Straits.

The arrival in Petrograd of Albert Thomas, the French Minister and a Socialist, gave to Milyukov the occasion for a friendly conversation, during which Milyukov asked Thomas to use his influence on Kerensky and Chernov and make them renounce the idea "of converting the proclamation of the government to the citizens concerning the aims of the war into a diplomatic document which could give a pretext to the Allies for reconsidering their views on the aims of the war."<sup>21</sup>

Although Milyukov was perfectly aware of the unfavorable effect to his cause which the declaration of the Provisional government of April 9, would have abroad, he was obliged to make it known officially to the Allied Powers. He chose to send it with an explanatory note on May 1, 1917. Among other things Milyukov wrote:

. . . the national aspiration to bring the World War to a definite victory is increased in consequence of the sense of common responsibility of all and everyone individually. . . . It is evident that the Provisional government will completely fulfill the obligations assumed toward our Allies.<sup>22</sup>

This last note gave rise to a tempest against Milyukov in the Soviet and among the members of the socialist parties. Lenin wrote in *Pravda* of May 4:

The aims are revealed. We have all reasons to thank Messrs. Milyukov and Guchkov for their note . . . plainly and clearly: war to the victorious end. The alliance with French and English bankers is holy. Who concluded this alliance with "our" Allies, that is with French and English billionaires? The Tsar, Rasputin, the Tsar's gang, certainly. But for Milyukov and company

<sup>21</sup>Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>22</sup>Adamov, p. 485 (Document No. CCCXXVIII).

this treaty is sacred. Why? . . . because Milyukov, Guchkov, Konovalov, Tereshchenko are representatives of the capitalists, and capitalists want the seizure of foreign territory.

Demonstrations were staged against Milyukov and eventually he had to resign on May 3. It seems that at that time, according to Paléologue, "only one man remained in Russia who still thought about Constantinople, St. Sophia and the Golden Horn. It was Milyukov, and that only because he was an historian."<sup>23</sup>

As soon as Tereshchenko was installed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he declared to Buchanan in a private conversation that he personally was never a partisan of the occupation of Constantinople and did not believe in its possibility. According to Tereshchenko, Prince Lvov never shared the annexationist views of Milyukov either.<sup>24</sup> However, to Buchanan's remark that the sooner Russia will announce her renunciation of Constantinople the better, Tereshchenko replied that this question had to be decided upon by the Russian people.<sup>25</sup>

The official proclamation of the reorganized Provisional government of May 19, 1917, emphasized that its aims consisted in: "a peace the purpose of which is neither to dominate other peoples nor to deprive them of their national possessions nor to occupy by force foreign territories—a peace without annexation and indemnities."<sup>26</sup> Further the Provisional government declared that in order to obtain such a peace the government had already taken preparatory steps toward an agreement with the Allies to that effect.

This proclamation of the Provisional government put Great Britain and France in a difficult situation. On the one hand these powers were very pleased with Russia's renunciation of any territorial acquisitions, which canceled the agreement concerning Constantinople and the Straits, but on the other hand they could not agree to the formula: "Peace without annexations and indemnities." The Great Powers were not prepared to abdicate the fruits of a victory and to renounce compensation for the enormous costs of the war. Their embarrassment was clearly reflected in the notes with which they answered the proclamation. Great Britain indi-

<sup>23</sup>Quoted by Adamov, *op. cit.*, p. 143, footnote 1.

<sup>24</sup>Buchanan's personal opinion about Milyukov was that he was so absorbed by the idea about Constantinople that he no longer reflected the views of the whole government.

<sup>25</sup>Sir George Buchanan. *My Mission to Russia*, London, 1923, II, 128.

<sup>26</sup>See Document CCCXXXI, Adamov, p. 488.

cated in her note of May 24, 1917, that she understood and shared the view of the Provisional government, that she had no "territorial desires in Europe," but that she "recognizes the aspirations of her Allies."<sup>27</sup>

The French government in her note of May 26, 1917, also in principle accepted the views of the Russian government, but pointed out her desire to recover the Provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which were "separated from her by force," and to seek reparations for the losses "endured in consequence of inhuman and unjustifiable devastation."<sup>28</sup>

Finally, on June 13, 1917,<sup>29</sup> Tereshchenko proposed the calling of a special conference of the Allies in order to define the aims of the war and revise all the agreements with the Allies, except the agreement concerning the exclusion of a separate peace. This note contained the very clear statement that Russia aspired to the conclusion of a general peace on a basis excluding every violence from any source, as well as every imperialistic design in any form.

The conference, however, never took place. The November Revolution made it impossible.

#### IV

Turkey surrendered on October 31, 1918. The Entente Powers were victorious, and November 11, 1918, the day of the armistice, marked the "successful end" of the war foreseen in the agreement of 1915 concerning Constantinople and the Straits. However, Russia was not among the victors. Already in March, 1918, she had concluded a separate peace with the Central Powers at Brest Litovsk. Furthermore, having seized power, the Bolshevik government denounced officially all the secret and other treaties concluded by the Tsarist government. Thus at that time Russia could not influence the fate of Constantinople and the Straits in any way.

A new basis for good-neighbor relations with Turkey was offered by the treaty of March, 1921, between the Soviets and Turkey. With a Russia which relinquished its imperialistic aspirations, Turkey thought friendship possible. According to this treaty the Straits had to remain open for merchantmen of all nations. As for

<sup>27</sup>Adamov, pp. 489-91 (Document No. CCCXXXII).

<sup>28</sup>Adamov, pp. 491-93 (Document No. CCCXXXIII).

<sup>29</sup>Document No. CCCXLVI, Adamov, pp. 501-2. The same Document is dated June 16 in Klyuchnikov and Sabanin, *Mezhdunarodnaya politika noveishego vremeni* (International Policy of the Recent Time), Moscow, 1925, p. 430.

warships, their right to pass the Straits had to be regulated by a special convention between the countries on the shores of the Black Sea.

However, the treaty of 1921 never became effective. The time had passed when the problem of the Straits could be settled by Russia and Turkey alone. Since 1841, the fate of the Straits was settled every time in accordance with international agreements with the obligatory participation of the Great Powers.

A conference was called at Lausanne in 1923 after the end of the Greek-Turkish war. In Lausanne, Turkey and Russia pleaded for the closing of the Straits to all warships with the exception of those of Turkey and Russia. Great Britain, on the other hand, demanded free passage for merchantmen and warships of all countries. A compromise was adopted giving the right to the fleet of every nation to pass the Straits providing that the tonnage of the fleet of each individual nation passing the Straits did not exceed the tonnage of the largest fleet in the Black Sea.<sup>30</sup> Further, complete neutralization of the Straits was adopted, and Turkey was obliged to destroy all the fortifications of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.<sup>31</sup> An international commission under the supervision of the League of Nations was established consisting of representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan. Those nations assumed special responsibilities for maintaining freedom of the Straits in case of attack.

Turkey submitted to the conditions of the Treaty. But Chicherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs and delegate to the Conference, left the session under protest without signing the treaty. Although the treaty of Lausanne was signed later by another representative of the Soviets, it was never ratified by Moscow.

The unacceptability of the Treaty of Lausanne for Russia was evident. The "key to the house" was lost and the door left wide open. The entrance to the Black Sea became free to any fleet. The limitation of the fleet tonnage of each individual country which might pass the Straits to the tonnage of the whole Russian Black Sea fleet was a poor guarantee for Russia, since a combined fleet of two or several powers could be many times as strong as the Russian fleet in the Black Sea. The neutralization of the Straits according to the Treaty of Lausanne was as "unbearable" to the Soviets as it was to Russia after the Paris Treaty of 1856.

<sup>30</sup>Annex § 2 of the agreement. Klyuchnikov and Sabanin, *op. cit.* p. 220.

<sup>31</sup> § 5, art. 4 of the Treaty.

A radical change in the general international situation in the thirties, compared with that in the twenties, could not remain without affecting the problem of the Straits. Hitler's Germany, armed to the teeth, threatened the peace of Europe. Italy was on the way to founding a new Empire. Japan occupied Manchuria. Great Britain and France sought the friendship of the Soviets and Turkey and thus were obliged to make concessions in the problem of the Straits.

In 1936, a new Convention was signed in Montreux, setting up a new régime for the Straits, which has remained in force until now. Turkey again has the right to fortify the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. In case of war she is free to close the Straits. Commercial navigation for all countries through the Straits remains open, but the passage of warships of all nations is strictly limited. Only light units with a tonnage not exceeding in total 15,000 tons are allowed to pass the Straits. No such right is given to battleships, aircraft carriers, and submarines. However, warships of the Black Sea Powers of all types and any tonnage, with the exception of submarines and carriers, are permitted to pass the Straits under certain limiting conditions.<sup>32</sup>

The Convention of Montreux was made subject to revision every five years after its ratification on November 9, 1936.<sup>33</sup> In Potsdam, in July, 1945, Truman, Attlee, and Stalin discussed this problem. It was agreed that the Convention of Montreux no longer met present-day conditions and should be revised. To that effect the matter was transferred to direct conversations between each of the three powers and Turkey.<sup>34</sup> A lively exchange of notes took place in 1946. No agreement was reached, however.

The demands of the Soviet Union, as formulated in the note of August 7, 1946, to Turkey (communicated also to the United States and Great Britain) are the following: "1. The Straits should be always open to the passage of merchant ships of all countries. 2. The Straits should be open to the passage of the warships of the Black Sea Powers. 3. Passage through the Straits for warships not belonging to the Black Sea Powers should not be permitted except in cases especially provided for. 4. The establishment of a régime of the Straits as the sole sea passage leading from the Black Sea and

<sup>32</sup>Articles 11 and 14 of the Convention. U. S. Department of State: *The Problem of the Turkish Straits*, Washington, D. C., 1947.

<sup>33</sup>Art. 29.

<sup>34</sup>Bevin's speech in Parliament on October 22, 1946.

to the Black Sea should come under the competence of Turkey and other Black Sea Powers. 5. Turkey and the Soviet Union, as the powers most interested and capable of guaranteeing freedom to commercial navigation and security, shall organize joint means of defense of the Straits for the prevention of the utilization of the Straits by other countries for aims hostile to the Black Sea powers."<sup>35</sup>

In the note of August 19, 1946, the United States accepted in principle the provisions expressed in the Soviet note of August 7, 1946, under 1, 2, and 3, but not those under 4 and 5. The American note pointed out that: 1. The régime of the Straits was not the exclusive concern of the Black Sea powers; 2. Turkey should remain primarily responsible for the defense of the Straits; 3. If the Straits should be attacked, it would be a threat to international security and a matter for action on the part of the United Nations; and 4. The régime of the Straits should be brought into appropriate relationship with the United Nations.

Also, Great Britain and Turkey in their notes of August 21, 1946, and August 22, 1946, respectively, accepted points 1, 2, and 3 of the Soviet Union's demands and rejected points 4 and 5.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, the Soviet Union could now reach the goal which was denied to the Tsars until 1915: namely, free passage of the Russian fleet through the Straits and closure of them to warships of non-Black Sea powers. However, these concessions do not satisfy Russia any more.

## V

Such was, in brief, the development of the problem of Constantinople and the Straits up to our days. Bound to Russia in the first periods of her history by religious and cultural ties, Constantinople became strategically and economically important as soon as Russia emerged on the shores of the Black Sea. The original political ideology with regard to Constantinople, which was created at the end of the fifteenth and in the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, and which combined Orthodoxy and autocracy with the doctrine of Russia's national aim and world historical mission, played a minor rôle in the twentieth century when strategic and economic reasons prevailed. Milyukov himself was opposed to the tendency of basing the claims concerning Constantinople on the old doctrine. In his series of articles entitled "Constantinople and the

<sup>35</sup>U. S. Department of State, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>36</sup>U. S. Department of State Bulletin, January 26, 1947.

Straits," which appeared in the journal *Vestnik Evropy* in the crucial months of January, February, and April, 1917, he wrote:

Those who like to seek justifications of our national aspirations in this circle of ideas, and derive them from the old Muscovite tradition, are inclined to exaggerate the importance of this doctrine. . . . They are disposed to transfer into the present the ideological features with which this problem was associated in the past. I consider this tendency theoretically erroneous and practically prejudicial.<sup>37</sup>

The strategic importance of the Straits for Russia is obvious. As long as the Straits are in foreign hands there is a permanent possibility of an invasion of Russia through the Black Sea, since the Russian fleet was never in a condition to resist effectively an attack of a great power, let alone of a combined fleet. Evidence in regard to this situation may be found in the war of 1854-56. The possession of the Straits would not only permit Russia to bar the entrance to a foreign fleet, but also to lead out her own from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. This last right, if enjoyed in 1905, would have spared Russia the long voyage of the Baltic fleet which brought it to the disaster of Tsushima.

There is also no question about the fact that the sea route through the Straits is of the utmost importance for Russian foreign trade. For instance, in the period of 1903-1912, 37% of the total Russian exports passed through the Straits. Sea transportation cannot be replaced by land trade, since the latter is 25 times more expensive, and the goods exported by sea consist of wheat and other crops, which cannot be carried at high transportation rates. Even a temporary closure of the Straits brings high losses to Russia. When the Straits were closed in 1911-13, Russian losses were 30,000,000 rubles for every month of the closure.<sup>38</sup> The closure of the Straits during the first World War occurred even before Turkey took part in it.

The Straits were also inaccessible to Russian ships and to those of the Allies during the second World War.

The economic development of the Russian South, which began already in the reign of Alexander I as a consequence of the incorporation of "New Russia" (Novorossiya), and Russia's position as the granary of Europe which she held before the November Revolution and possibly will hold again, depend closely upon the secure freedom of navigation through the Straits. It may be assumed

<sup>37</sup>*Vestnik Evropy*, January, 1917, p. 227.

<sup>38</sup>For further statistical material see the report of N. A. Bazili, in Adamov, *op. cit.*, pp. 456 ff.

with a high degree of probability that if Turkey had joined the Central Powers in the second World War, as she did in the first, she would have been powerless to prevent the defeat of Hitler and his allies, but she would have lost Constantinople and the Straits to the Soviet Union. At Teheran, Yalta, or Potsdam, Constantinople and the Straits with their hinterland would have been adjudicated to Russia, as was the case in 1915.

The contemporary makers of Russia's destiny have taken over many political traditions of the Tsarist régime. Among those traditions they have inherited the age-old aspiration of Russia to insure for herself the unrestricted use of the Straits and to exclude from them at the same time the fleets of all non-Black-Sea nations. That this aspiration is in accordance with the political, strategic, and economic interests of Russia is beyond doubt. The question is, however, what ways and means should be employed in order to achieve this goal. One would think that this aim should be reached not by using force, not by "domination of other nations" and not by "seizure of foreign territories," i.e., not by means which the Provisional government declined to make use of in its political program in 1917. This dislike of annexations was shared at that time, by the Bolshevik party also. Lenin wrote about World War I: ". . . The war is going on between two groups of oppressors, between two robbers for the sake of how to divide the booty, and who shall rob Turkey and the Colonies."

In Art. 1 of the Charter of the United Nations the purposes of the Organization are described as follows: ". . . to maintain international peace and security . . . to bring about by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law adjustment or settlement of international situations which might lead to a break of the peace."

Would such a way not be more congruent with the spirit of our time? But Russian aspirations concerning Constantinople and the Straits, however well founded from the viewpoint of Russian interests, will at the present time be inevitably met with suspicion and malevolence by the Western Powers. The general policy of expansion and imperialism adopted by the Soviet Union after World War II is responsible for this.

# Postwar Literary Patterns of Soviet Russia

BY VERA ALEXANDROVA

In order to understand the postwar literary developments of Soviet Russia one has to keep in mind some essential facts. The Soviet-German war involved in its turmoil millions of drafted men, while many millions of civilians were uprooted from their homes and thrown to the four corners of the huge country. The disaster of the retreat and German occupation was silently ascribed to the unpreparedness of the Soviet régime for the war. During the first period of the war (1941-1942), under the influence of heavy losses, the Communist Party seemed to fold its banner. The war was conducted as a great popular struggle, as a Second Fatherland War in which people were united by their devotion to their national independence and integrity. At that time Soviet officials showed a certain liberalism, letting the people believe that after the war some changes would become inevitable.

The whole situation shifted again after the German rout at Stalingrad. The prospect of victory changed the minds of the Soviet leaders. They began to offer a new explanation for the disaster of the first period of the war. According to their contention the party leadership had not been surprised by the unhappy beginning of the war: the retreat and the great territorial losses were merely a part of a "well-elaborated plan." Wishes and hopes, however, have their own life and sometimes show more tenacity than people themselves.

So obstinate were these wishes for change that even after the final victory, when the Soviet élite was aware that nothing would be fulfilled, the Leningrad poetess, Olga Berggolts, sought to remind her readers of them once more. In an article "The Return of Peace" (published in the magazine *Znamya*, September, 1945) she recalled how during the war "it seemed to us sometimes that as soon as the war was over all would suddenly and unrecognizably change—our customs, our whole daily life."

This was in fact not only the general feeling of the gigantic rear of the country, but even more intense were the expectations for

change among the soldiers of the Soviet Army. A vivid picture of that spirit is shown in the novel *With Front Greetings* by Valentin Ovechkin (*Oktyabr*, May-June, 1945).

The main character of the novel is a Communist, a Captain Spivak, who shortly before the end of the war had the chance to visit for some days his native village somewhere in the liberated Ukraine. During his travel to and fro he listened to the conversations of many people. Returning to the Army, he shares his impressions and views on the future with his friend, Lieutenant Petrenko. Together they decide to write a letter to the party comrades of the rear in order to orient them in the real postwar problems which they do not seem to understand. Both agree upon some basic facts. People who went through war ordeals reexamined their own past and gathered some new views concerning the future. External appearances to the contrary, they had changed in their innermost beings and deserved to be treated with a much more human approach.

Ovechkin's novel produced a great impression upon literary critics, some of them agreeing with the views of Captain Spivak and its author. It is worth mentioning in this connection the article of Vera Smirnova, "Life Goes On," (*Znamya*, January, 1946). Departing from the idea that war is over, she tries to formulate the chief themes of postwar literature:

. . . People are now coming home—either from the front, evacuation, captivity or merely from warfare; they are coming home into peace. How are those people, what do they think and feel, how do they plan to live, how do they want to arrange their lives—these are the basic problems of today. The first floor belongs to those who fought and won victory, they deserve the right to propose and to demand. Each sensitive writer throughout the entire world is listening to the *Man from the War* and the main theme of literature is the theme of Returning.

The literary beginning was promising. Many young writers, unknown before the war, tried to bring together their impressions in verse form (Semyon Gudzenko, Julia Drunina, Alexander Mezhirov, Mikhail Lukonin). In a poem "We Shall not Die of Old Age, We Shall Die of Old Wounds" (*Znamya*, July, 1946), Semyon Gudzenko tells a story about a soldier who came back home; he has seen many foreign cities and collected many stories and songs, but he keeps silent because he likes to hear "what happened here while we were fighting there?" Mikhail Lukonin in a poem "To The People Who Returned" (*Novyi Mir*, October-November, 1946)

tries to convince his relatives and friends that people who have returned now don't need "to be greeted by solemn speeches or wreathed with laurels" and, addressing his beloved poetess, asks her "to help him through his daily life."

To this group should be added the poem "The House on the Road" (*Znamya*, May-June, 1946) by Alexander Tvardovski, a middle-aged poet of peasant origin who during the war enjoyed a great popularity with his poem "Vasilii Tyorkin." His "House on the Road" is of lasting value. It is a story of a peasant family in a Smolensk district. It begins with the description of the Sunday morning of June 22, 1941. The morning is quiet and serene; Andrei Sivtsov is cutting grass in his garden, humming the old folk-tune:

Cut and mow while there is dew,  
When dew is gone, time to go home. . . .

As peaceful as these words of the tune sound, they have something foreboding in them connected with the image of the scythe. Then comes the tragic blow of the war. Andrei is drafted into the army on the first day and leaves his young wife, Anna, alone with little children, asking her to take care of them. But how to do it, when soon after the war itself stands at the threshold of the house? Anna decides rather to stay in the house than to go into the unknown world. But then comes the day when the Germans turn her out of doors. Far from home, somewhere in a German concentration camp, she gives birth to a boy to whom she gives the name of her husband. Years pass, years of suffering and misery. Both Andrei and Anna, without knowing anything about each other, survive. One day after the end of the war Anna, with the children and the little Andreika, starts on foot on her way back. Andrei has returned earlier without finding any trace of his old house. Again it is summer, again grass has to be cut:

Cut and mow while there is dew,  
When dew is gone, time to go home. . . .

Andrei is building another house and still is waiting as the poem ends.

The majority of early postwar poems did not please the official critics; they reproached the young poets for their "individualistic spirit," for their "pessimistic mood," and their "exaggerated devotion to the war experiences" and recommended finding a way "to enter into the joyful and constructive postwar life of our country."

Meanwhile, a series of new novels appeared. During the war

some critics predicted that the main novels concerning the war, something like a second *War and Peace*, would appear only after the end. Although the great majority of new novels (*The Young Guard* by A. Fadeyev, *War for Peace* by F. Panferov, *The Night of the Commander* by G. Beresko, *Stalingrad* by V. Nekrasov, *While Taking Berlin* by V. Ivanov, *The Standard's Bearers* by A. Gonchar) deal with war experiences, not one of them has the remotest likeness to Tolstoy's famous epic. I am speaking not of their artistic value but of their general scope and emotional intensity.

Everyone who has followed Soviet literature since the beginning of the war, especially during the first period of military reverses, has witnessed some new and important attitudes in handling the persons involved. For the first time during the Soviet régime, the Communists in those first literary reactions seemed to recede into the background while ordinary Russians, sometimes not entirely sympathetic to the Communists, became more prominent (see, for instance, *The Tales of Ivan Sudaryov* by the late Alexei Tolstoy, Simonov's play *The Russian People*, *The Invasion* by Leonid Leonov, *The Front* of A. Korneichuk). Even when the heroes were Communists, as in Simonov's play *The Russian People*, or in his novel *Days and Nights*, it is the Russian in them more than the political person that stands out.

The postwar novels, meanwhile, in accordance with official conceptions, emphasize the leading rôle of the Party members in the Soviet Army as well as in the administrative and industrial life of the country. Regardless of many sincere efforts to present such heroes as leading characters, the writers do not succeed. This failure causes the critics to meditate: why are the negative heroes so convincing while the positive ones are emotionally cold or unconvincing? It is obvious that this return of the prewar official heroes produces a rather negative effect.

The resolution issued by the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party condemning the war writings of Mikhail Zoshchenko and Anna Akhmatova (August 14, 1946) and the literary purge which followed, deteriorated the quality of the writing even more. The theme of war experiences was too political and too dangerous. Meanwhile, a new theme was suggested by the postwar development—the fulfillment of the Fourth Five-Year Plan. Three novels dealing with this theme are especially worthy of mention: *The Smoke of the Fatherland* (*Novyi Mir*, November, 1947) by Constantin Simonov, *Kruzhilikh* by Vera Panova (*Znamya*, November-

December, 1947) and *The Cavalier of the Golden Star* (Oktyabr, April, 1947 and April-May, 1948) by Semyon Babevsky.

The main character of the novel, *The Smoke of the Fatherland*, is the engineer and Communist, Peter Basargin, a former officer of the Red Army who was sent at the end of 1943 on a mission to France and other European countries, and later to the United States. The novel begins with a description of his journey back to the Soviet Union, where in a small town of Smolensk region his wife is living. While in foreign countries, Basargin felt uneasy; he became homesick. This feeling is expressed by the very title of the novel: the words "Smoke of the Fatherland" are used by Chatski, the famous hero of Griboedov's play *Woe from Wit*, as he greets Moscow after some years of travelling.

Trying to sum up his various impressions of the United States, Basargin feels that the most essential feature is the "loneliness of the man" there. If somebody would ask Basargin to formulate in two words what the life abroad is like, without thinking he would answer, "Millions of lonely people." That is why he is so glad upon arrival at the Soviet border when he hears the familiar "We". During twenty days of his journey he enjoys this word "We".

"We" was the train running through the cold spaces of the Smolensk region, and "We" was the cold winter spaces and the huts in dark spots rebuilt of old burned and fresh wood; "We" were the passengers; "We" was the old guard and the shivering boy in rags. Yes, this "We" had no exceptions: the shivering boy in rags was also "We"—our sorrow, our postwar, loud-crying poverty which could not be sated at once. . . .

On his arrival, Basargin is greeted by the building engineer, Kondrashov, the husband of his sister, Helen, in whose house his wife and son are living. The first meeting with the relatives, however, is not as joyful as Basargin expected. His wife is absent in a neighbouring town. While waiting for her return, the whole day is spent in discussions about America and "us." Kondrashov is a frank admirer of America, its high standard of living and technical culture. This attitude of Kondrashov toward America upsets Basargin and he tries to disillusion Kondrashov, but fails. The quarrel between Kondrashov and Basargin occupies the centre of the narration. Kondrashov is a nonconformist or, as Basargin likes to characterize him, "a miserable survival of capitalism." Basargin tries to unmask him as a lamentable egotist who first thinks of his own well being and that of his relatives. The most striking impression of the novel is that all Basargin's suggestions concerning

Kondrashov produce rather a contrary effect on the reader. The reader is pleased by the dignity of Kondrashov, his energy, his realistic mind, and especially his hatred of grandiloquent empty words. This latter trait is expressed in a retort to Basargin's appeal to morality:

Give me normal conditions when everything necessary is at hand . . . then I myself will be a moralist. A Saint! But if you are working under such conditions as those that exist now, when around you is nothing and you have to practice deception in order to be able to live, you can only require work but don't ask me about morality. I will put morality into storage until better times.

But Kondrashov's official condemnation centers around his conception of the future. Basargin makes an allusion to it saying that if Fascism in America and England triumph, they will impose the capitalistic system upon the whole world, "but we will not surrender, we will fight, too." Kondrashov answers resolutely that he is now fifty-two years old and has had "enough" in two previous wars. Then he says emphatically "The war ought not to be. You understand—it ought not to be. It has no right to be. At any price. . . ." adding, "You think that I dare to say it only to you? If Stalin would sit here I would say the same to him looking straight in his eyes."

The image of Kondrashov is artistically a success; so official criticism has all the more reason to blame the author for his "political error."

The life of a big plant in the novel *Kruzhilikha* by Vera Panova also concerns postwar conditions. The action of the book takes place during the last year of the war and the beginning of peace. The head of the big military plant, Kruzhilikha, is General Listopad. He is a Communist of peasant origin. Panova likes her hero and is interested in presenting him not only as the manager of a big state enterprise, but as a human being. Listopad is energetic, successful. He has a young wife, Klavdiya, a student at a technical college. Before the war, Klavdiya lived in Leningrad, but during the war-blockade her parents perished. Klavdiya herself would probably have died of starvation if at the last moment she had not been evacuated to the Ural region where Kruzhilikha is situated. Here she met Listopad and they were married. The novel starts with a description of Listopad's bringing Klavdiya to the maternity ward. On the surface they give the impression of a harmonious couple. Klavdiya dies in childbirth. After her death Listopad finds some of her notes written in shorthand; he gives them to his secretary

to be deciphered. From the notes the secretary realizes this is Klavdiya's diary. From this diary, about which the secretary does not tell Listopad, the reader learns that the real relations between Klavdiya and Listopad were not so rosy. Listopad never had time for his wife; all his energy was used for work and social activities. Klavdiya is sure that if she would die, Listopad would not feel sorry for very long. This premonition is correct; at the end of the novel Listopad is in love again with a young woman engineer.

Nevertheless, Panova likes her hero so much that she is not afraid to unmask more important shortcomings of Listopad. They are shown in his conflict with Usdechkin, the Chairman of the Workers Committee. In many ways Usdechkin is of an opposite character. He is a thin, pale, ugly man who, during the war, was shell-shocked; at the front he lost his wife and now has to take care of two little children, the old mother-in-law, and her youngest son. In some regards Usdechkin is reminiscent of a character of Russian pre-revolutionary literature. Usdechkin dislikes Listopad for his arbitrary nature and criticizes his methods of administration. This annoys Listopad, although he knows he can eliminate his opponent at any moment. In order to defend her main hero, Panova unmasks some moral qualities of Usdechkin. Learning the news about the death of Klavdiya, Usdechkin feels "at least some justice seems to exist in the world." The next moment, however, he is trying to forget "this ignoble thought."

The most interesting moment of the novel is the night-meeting of Usdechkin and Listopad. The initiative for this meeting belongs to Listopad. Encouraged by the end of the war and by his successes, Listopad decides to speak frankly of his relations with Usdechkin and visits him late in the evening. Their dialogue could have been the climax of the novel if Panova had not repressed certain dramatic moments. Usdechkin says frankly he knows why Listopad does not like him.

According to Listopad's judgment, Usdechkin does not work well enough. In reality, however, Usdechkin gives "to the Party and to the people" all he has, but he works "quietly, without self-advertisement." Listopad retorts that he also "is probably giving all he has." Usdechkin reminds him then that for him the plant Kruzhilikh is, so to speak, "home, family, and motherland," while for the director it is only "one stage from one post to another. . . ." The winner of this dialogue is Usdechkin, but Panova seems rather interested in the end of an old animosity than in pointing out the ethical problems which are involved in this conflict.

Panova's novel has been vigorously discussed in the press and at some meetings. According to *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (January 17, 1948), some speakers pointed out that "the very conflict between Usdechkin and Listopad is invented. In real life such relations between the director of a plant and the chairman of the Workers Committee do not occur. Should this happen in reality—after one week one of them would be removed from his post." Maybe this is correct, in real life such relations and such talks between the director and the representative of the Workers' Committee are wishful-thinking. More significant, however, is the rôle which this wishful-thinking plays in the novel. It confirms how strong is the demand of the public for a human approach.

This demand for a human approach succeeds in replacing the usual prewar attention to the industrial "achievements" of the current Five-Year Plan. The only novel which deals with the post-war Five-Year Plan is *The Cavalier of the Golden Star* by Semyon Babaevsky. Even in this novel one finds some interesting new details. The main character of the novel is Sergei Tutarinov, holder of the Golden Star, a young Cossack, son of a collective farmer. Before the war Sergei intended to go to an engineering college; decorated with high orders he returns home after the war is over. At first he has no plans concerning his future. He wants to rest a little and go away for studies. But he is an active character and becomes involved in local affairs. Soon after he makes the acquaintance of the *khozyian* (the boss) of the area, the chairman of the local Executive Committee, Fyodor Khokhlakov, who is a self-confident and experienced administrator, standing high in the opinion of the district authorities. Very soon Sergei becomes involved in a conflict with Khokhlakov. This conflict is based on the same differences which are depicted in Simonov's novel *The Smoke of the Fatherland*. Khokhlakov, like Kondrashov, is a realistic-minded specialist who does not like "useless dreamers." Sergei Tutarinov, on the contrary, sympathizes with those local officials who like to surpass the government's plans. Khokhlakov tries to explain to Sergei how difficult the real conditions are: "You are now in great fame, Sergei. But the peace-conditions here, excuse me, you don't know!" The conflict grows when Khokhlakov realizes that Sergei's plan to build an electric power-station in the Cossack village is supported by the secretary of the Party committee. In a short time Tutarinov has a brilliant career. He succeeds in interesting the district authorities who promise to help Sergei. They say the

achievement of Sergei's plan can be exploited politically and, after the success, other areas may follow this enlarged program of construction. Tutarinov is sent to Moscow and, after his return, he is nominated Chairman of the Executive Committee instead of Khokhlakov. It is worth mentioning that Khokhlakov's merits were so great during the difficult years of the recent war that he remains a member of the Executive Committee.

Among the critical comments on this novel, significant is an article "About the Positive and Critical Bases of Socialist Realism," by Tatyana Motylova, professor of literature in Moscow University (*Oktyabr*, December, 1947). In this article the author reproaches Babaevsky and some other postwar writers for the "liberal handling" of negative heroes and the attitude of "kind-heartedness toward the negative types," such as Khokhlakov, for example.

This "liberal" attitude toward the negative characters of postwar plays and novels has been severely criticized at the twelfth plenary meeting of the Union of Soviet Writers in December, 1948. It would appear that the gap between Soviet officials and Soviet writers and readers not only continues but is growing wider.

# Prince Igor in America

BY ELIAS L. TARTAK

AMERICAN interest in Russian culture has followed a somewhat erratic and fitful but, on the whole, a fairly "normal" course. In the second half of the nineteenth century, only the individual high peaks of Russian literature—Turgenev, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky, Dostoevsky—found attentive ears. Later, from the beginning of the present century and, particularly, for the last thirty years, there has been manifest an increasing interest in greater integration of Russian studies. *Pari passu*, there has come about a widening of the American range of vision, a deepening of its perspective, and a keener interest in the study of the origins and fountain-heads of Russian culture and literature. In this connection, the publication of an authoritative book, *La Geste du Prince Igor*, is an event of importance in American scholarship.<sup>1</sup>

The *Slovo o Polku Igoreve* (*The Tale of the Raid of Igor*) is a document of great importance in the history of Russian literature. Discovered in a collection of ancient manuscripts in the last decade of the eighteenth century and published for the first time in 1800, it was at once recognized as a work of the highest artistic value and, if genuine, as throwing a new and dazzling light on Russian culture of the pre-Mongol period. Yes, if genuine, but was it genuine? The Russian scholars of the time, in the adolescence of Russian Slavonic studies, were naturally shy and diffident because of the recent story of MacPherson's *Ossian* and Chatterton's "discoveries." The situation was further complicated by the fact that the manuscript of the *Slovo* was burned in the Moscow fire of 1812. No other manuscript of the *Slovo* has ever been discovered.

However, after many initial doubts and critical discussions, the *Slovo* was recognized to be a genuine literary monument of the end of the twelfth century. And ever since, with the splendid development of Russian philological studies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the *Slovo* has been studied and re-examined in each generation by a host of eminent Russian and Western scholars, always to be accepted as an authentic literary work of pre-Mongol times. Its

<sup>1</sup>*La Geste Du Prince Igor*. Texte établi, traduit et commenté sous la direction d'Henri Grégoire, de Roman Jakobson et de Marc Szeftel, assistés de J. A. Joffe. New York, printed by Rausen Bros., 1948.

authenticity grew, so to speak, with time. A vast literature on the *Slovo* arose, partly in elucidation, not always successful, of the obscurities of the first edition, which, in themselves, were the probable result of the imperfections of the lost manuscript. The list of Russian scholars who have written on the *Slovo* is simply the roster of the best known names in Russian philology and linguistics from Vostokov and Buslaev to Shakhmatov and Istrin, including Tikhonravov and Potebnja.

The foremost poets of Russia—Zhukovsky, Pushkin, Maikov, Bunin, and Block—were deeply impressed by the *Slovo*; its echo reverberates through much of the best Russian poetry of the last 125 years. As to its authenticity, Pushkin summed up the problem with the trenchant felicity and precision of genius:

The authenticity of the song is proven by its very spirit of antiquity, something which cannot be counterfeited. Who of our eighteenth century writers had enough talent for that? Karamzin? But he was not a poet. Derzhavin? But Derzhavin did not even know his Russian, let alone the language of the *Song of Igor's Host* [the *Slovo*]. All the other writers put together had not so much poetry in them as there is to be found in the plan, the description of the battle, or the [prince's] escape.

Pushkin was eminently right. To counterfeit with such mastery the language and spirit of the period, the historical precision of circumstance and detail, all expressed in such expert imagery and flawless music of diction, required the combination of a Mommsen and Schiller or of a Kliuchevsky and Lermontov, an impossibility for the Russia of 1800.

Some three or four decades after the publication of the *Slovo*, there were also discovered several versions of the *Zadonshchina* (*The Battle Beyond the Don*) and *The Tale of Mamai's Debacle*, two closely related poems or orations in praise of the great victory won by the Russians over the Tartars in 1380. Both poems were apparently composed around 1400. In each of these poems the abundance of borrowings from the *Slovo*, borrowings generally garbled and often amusingly misunderstood, was only too obvious. Two centuries of the Tartar yoke told their tale in lowering the level of Russian culture. However, the very imitation in its clumsiness clinched the case for the *Slovo*, if such clinching was at all needed.

Here the matter rested for almost a century, until twelve years ago when M. André Mazon, a French scholar of repute, who specializes in modern Russian literature, revived the long buried controversy. In brief, A. Mazon insists that the *Slovo* is, after all, a *pastiche*, that is, a forgery of the eighteenth century. And, contrary

to orthodox doctrine, he claims that the *Slovo* is an imitation of the *Zadonshchina* and *The Tale of Mamai*. If this were so, the deliberate judgment of a century of Russian philology would be overthrown. Has he succeeded in establishing his thesis?

All Mazon's efforts to associate the *Slovo* with the Russian poetics of the eighteenth century seem futile. What a difference there is between the stilted diction of the eighteenth century, as yet unsure of its very language, and the organic quality of the *Slovo's* speech, so unique and yet so akin to the best of the period's literature, like the *Letopis* (Chronicles), Vladimir Monomach's *Testament*, and the best of the clergy's writings and orations of the time. That the *Slovo* is steeped in the mythological and epic poetics of the twelfth century is evident from the first page.

In the recently published *La Geste du Prince Igor*, three articles by M. Szeftel, G. Vernadsky, and R. Jakobson, respectively, reaffirm the orthodox position. These three scholars meet A. Mazon's arguments and suspicions squarely, discussing the whole problem of the *Slovo's* authenticity from several viewpoints: historico-political and ethnographic (Szeftel), geopolitical and archeological (Vernadsky) and philological and linguistic (Jakobson). These articles themselves represent a wealth of organized scholarship on ancient Russia, and are simply indispensable to every student and teacher of things Russian.

In his analysis of how closely the *Slovo* reflects the political and economic picture of ancient Russia's relations with its "eastern" and "south-eastern" neighbors, G. Vernadsky opens new vistas for many a student. M. Szeftel's "historical commentary" is a rich quarry of relevant information on the political and economic history of the period. His detail is never trivial. However, for heroic labor, the prize must go to Professor Jakobson. The brunt of defending the authenticity of the *Slovo* falls on his essay. It is a massive monograph in which he, in meeting A. Mazon's arguments, subjects the *Slovo* to a careful linguistic and literary scrutiny. By drawing upon the labors of his numerous predecessors and bringing their work into a new focus, constantly employing his gifts for tenacious and skillful analysis, he arrives at a constructive theoretical conclusion.

But *La Geste* has even more to offer—an analytical reconstruction, on the basis of its first edition of the text of the lost manuscript as well as a similar reconstruction of the original ancient text (both by R. Jakobson). And, on the basis of these reconstructions, we are given four new translations of the *Slovo*: English (the late S. H.

Cross), French (H. Gregoire), Polish (J. Tuwim), and modern Russian (R. Jakobson).

The first edition of the *Slovo* contained a number of obscurities. With the loss of the manuscript, apparently a fifteenth or sixteenth century copy, it was difficult to say whether these obscurities had been caused by the state of the manuscript or by the inexperience of Russian scholarship of the time, probably by both. Numerous emendations have since been offered by Russian savants and, by this time, several corrections have been accepted by most scholars. Jakobson is offering a few more, in fact, a reconstructed text. Some of his suggestions are very convincing, some seem bold. It is true that with his corrections the text achieves real clarity and coherence.

A word about the four new translations of the *Slovo*. The earlier English translations, such as those by Professor A. Petrunkevich, Isabel Hapgood, L. A. Magnus, should be remembered as the work of pioneers. They will now be superseded, though not entirely displaced, by more precise translations from a more correct text. In this connection, H. Gregoire's French translation is excellent both for its accuracy and, above all, for its successful rendition of the *Slovo*'s poetical values, a truly remarkable feat if we consider the differences between ancient Russian and French.

S. H. Cross' English translation is precise enough, but somewhat prosy, heavy and, occasionally, lacking in nuance. For example, the invocation to prince Vsevolod (v. 124), S. H. Cross translates: "Thou canst stir up the Volga with oars" (*Mozhesh Volgu vesty raskropiti*), rather than: "Thou canst sprinkle (splash) out the Volga with your oars," which is linked to the remainder of the verse: "You can bail out the Don with your helmet" (here Cross has "pour out").

J. Tuwim, a well-known Polish poet and translator of Russian poetry, has contributed a Polish translation of the *Slovo* in verse. This fine version sounds at times a little more martial and romantic than the original, but this is rather to be praised than criticized. On the other hand, Jakobson's own translation into modern Russian seems deliberately to avoid the archaic and poetic diction of the original. In its precision, it is valuable to the student, but its speech and diction seem almost too modern and colloquial.

The debates centering around the *Slovo* in *La Geste du Prince Igor* are important additions to American and Slavonic scholarship. The book calls for a speedy English translation. It will then become a boon not only to the special student, but also to a wider circle of readers.

# Aldanov as an Historical Novelist

BY LEON I. TWAROG

THE historical novel is not a newcomer in Russian literature. M. N. Zagoskin and I. I. Lazhechnikov in the first half of the nineteenth century followed in the footsteps of the then popular Sir Walter Scott; later, with the evolution of nationalism, regionalism, and Populism, historical material was utilized to further definite social and political aims. At the turn of the century, V. Bryusov and D. S. Merezhkovsky rebelled against this narrow and utilitarian treatment, put the historical novel into an artistic setting and used authentic historical material as a medium for the deep universal truths they wanted to communicate. It is this conception that the historical novels of Mark Alexandrovich Aldanov represent and perpetuate.<sup>1</sup>

The work for which Aldanov is best known internationally is his tetralogy, *The Thinker*, which deals with historical developments in Russia and Western Europe from 1793 to 1821. This was originally conceived as a trilogy but it became expedient for the author to publish the second section in two parts. Parts of the first three volumes and the entire fourth volume first appeared in the Russian periodical, *Sovremennye Zapiski* (Contemporary Annals), published in Paris from 1920 to 1940. The concluding volume, *St. Helena, A Little Island*, was published in 1921 (English translation, 1924), the first volume, *The Ninth of Thermidor*, in 1923 (English translation, 1926), the two parts of the second volume: *Devil's Bridge*, in 1925 (English translation, 1928), *Conspiracy* (not translated into English) in 1927.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Aldanov is the pen name of Mark Alexandrovich Landau. He was born in Kiev in 1886, educated in local schools, and received degrees in chemistry and law from the University of Kiev. He was a member of a moderate socialist group. Directly after the Bolshevik Revolution he went to South Russia, and, in 1919, came to Paris where he settled. There he went to work for Paul Miliukov's paper *Poslednie Novosti* when it was founded in 1921. In 1941 Aldanov came to the United States.

<sup>2</sup>Other works by Aldanov include a trilogy *The Key, Flight, and The Cave* (1930-36) which is linked to the *Thinker* series. Some of the themes are carried over into *The Beginning of the End* (English translation, *The Fifth Seal*). Other major works are *Fire and Smoke*, *Contemporaries*, *Portraits*, *Lands and People*, *Tenth Symphony* (English translation, 1948), *A Warrior's Grace* (English translation, *For Thee The Best*), and *Effluxes* (English translation, *Before the Deluge*). Aldanov's works have been translated into twenty-three languages.

The historical novelist is faced with the problem of producing both good literature and an accurate record of historical events. To have an objective point of view, the historical novelist must of necessity be far enough removed from the times he is writing about so that he can analyze documents dealing with all sides of his subject with due perspective and detachment. Usually, considerable time passes by before material concerning the intimate life of historical personages becomes available to the researcher. The period chosen by Aldanov has been very well documented, but it was not until recent times that many facts, as, for example, those concerning the death of Emperor Paul I of Russia have become available. It is evident, therefore, that Aldanov writes at a most propitious time for the period he has chosen.

Aldanov really makes unnecessary the usual introductory statements to acquaint the reader with the background of the various stories, for Aldanov considers his series to be one great novel in four parts, each part of which is connected to that which follows by incidents within the books themselves. In the opening book, *The Ninth of Thermidor*, which deals with the years 1793-1794, Aldanov makes skilful use of flashbacks into Russian history as far back as the arrival of Catherine II in Russia in 1744. He leads the reader so gently up through the years that there is no perceptible barrier for the reader to hurdle at the beginning of the story in 1793. In a very few pages, the intellectual milieu of the period, the reaction in Russia against France and Frenchmen, and the internal difficulties in Russia are all very casually mentioned, but in such a way that the reader immediately grasps the situation.

Although all four novels are primarily centered on the same basic themes, nevertheless they differ greatly with respect to individual features, one of the most obvious of which is plot structure. *Conspiracy* is the only novel which utilizes the conventional plot structure in which almost all incidents lead to and culminate in a single climax. This is probably due to the fact that the book deals almost entirely with Russia. On the other hand, *The Ninth of Thermidor* has merely a semblance of a plot. It is in fact rather a series of dramatic portraits set into the proper historical and intellectual background and tied together through the experiences of a stock character, Staal, who travels to Germany, England, Belgium, and France and manages to meet through a remarkable series of coincidences many of the celebrities of the time. The extensive use of flashbacks, however, does not make for complete unity. *St. Helena*,

too, is without conventional plot or form, but an extreme degree of unity is achieved through the simplicity and mellow timbre of the story. *Devil's Bridge* is virtually without any plot. Once again the important thing for Aldanov is not a neatly arranged plot, but rather a series of flashes and dramatic portraits taking in episodes in Russia, France, and Italy. Only the battle at Devil's Bridge could be called a climax, yet it is a climax to only one of the many themes in the novel. It seems as if the author were attempting to cram into one book all of the major European developments of that period.

But whatever the type of plot, in all of his novels Aldanov sends a character traveling so that he may use him as a camera, or as an all-seeing eye. Aldanov's camera is always focused upon the very events any historian would have liked to observe in person. In the first three novels, Staal serves this purpose, and in the concluding book, De Balmain is used, although he really has almost no active part in the story. In all four novels, Aldanov has used dramatic portraits of historical personages predominantly to illustrate his themes.

It is in these character studies that the real strength of Aldanov's work is to be found. There is a richness and a wholeness about his brilliant dramatic portraits of historical personalities. One of Aldanov's favorite procedures is to make his characters say the most trite things and do things stripped of all importance, thus destroying the illusions most of us have kept since early schooldays of the mighty and of the great. Catherine the Great, Robespierre, Talleyrand, and Count Vorontsov, the Russian Ambassador to the Court of St. James, are all treated in this manner. In *Devil's Bridge*, Suvorov is not pictured as popular myth would depict him, but is shown as an ordinary little old man, hardened physically, but not mentally through the vicissitudes of his difficult life, but still possessed of the same frivolous thoughts, passions, and desires that other men have. It is almost a sacrilege to show the great hero playfully dripping hot wax onto the nose of his servant in order to awaken him, but this shows him to be a human being and not a military robot. The description of Lord Nelson, Sir William and Lady Hamilton could well stand on its own merits, and is indeed a story all by itself, so graphically does Aldanov picture this relationship stripped of all its usual glamour. Perhaps in none of his character studies has Aldanov been so successful as in depicting the personality of Napoleon in *St. Helena*. The power which made him the

greatest man in the world for a period of time still flows out to his followers, and leaves all of them in awe of his genius. Yet it is not the warrior Napoleon that the author shows in his book, but a little fat man, both good and bad-tempered, who is guarded by scores of soldiers so that he won't be able to get away. His tender side is shown in his relations with the little girl Betsy Balcombe, but some of his less admirable traits are also aired in these descriptions. The portrayal of Napoleon stands out particularly because Aldanov has not cluttered *St. Helena* with other equally interesting and important characters, as he has done in *The Ninth of Thermidor* and *Devil's Bridge*.

## II

It is constantly being brought to mind by Soviet, American, and British critics that Aldanov's *The Ninth of Thermidor* was a novel about the French Revolution in terms of the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917, and that Aldanov was trying to prophesy future events as they were to take shape in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, there are some critics who disagree with this statement. In his introduction to *Devil's Bridge*, Aldanov vigorously denies that he attempted to draw any parallels between the two revolutions. He complains, moreover, about the fact that some of the critics have even picked out the contemporary Soviet citizens from whom Aldanov has drawn his characterizations of Talleyrand, Pitt, Robespierre, etc. Aldanov staunchly maintains that this was not the case, and that Talleyrand and his other historical personages are drawn on the basis of studies he has made of these characters.

The Soviet critic, S. Monosov, is particularly bitter with respect to Aldanov's ideas. He insists that Aldanov is venting his own spite on the Soviets, that Talleyrand is Aldanov himself, and that like Talleyrand, Aldanov is awaiting the fall of the Soviet régime so that he may come back to help save his country. In addition to all of this, Monosov maintains that the reason for the inclusion of the Devil-Thinker is that Aldanov was trying to convince the world that the revolution was the work of the devil. He writes:

In short, the emigré white guard element apparently has only one consolation these days; that is to hope for historical analogies. The French Revolution concluded with the Bonapartist coup d'état—says Aldanov with every line of his novel—wait and hope! It is with just such a coup d'état that the Russian Revolution too will end.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>S. Monosov, *Krasnaya Nov*, February, 1925, p. 281.

Of course, actually many things might be construed as being said in criticism of the Soviet Union, whether they are uttered by Talleyrand, Vorontsov, or Pierre Lamort who carries most of the philosophical ideas in the novel. But in fairness to Aldanov it should be pointed out that he showed also the other side of the revolution, the enthusiastic side of it. Beauregard who was awaiting death in prison together with Lamort and who was executed on the evening of the ninth of Thermidor, kept faith in the principles of the revolution in spite of the fact that he, an ardent supporter of the revolution, was scheduled to go to the guillotine. In his conversation with Pierre Lamort, he says: "The path to good is through evil. Yes, the Revolution sends me to the scaffold, and on the scaffold I will shout, 'Long live the Revolution.' "<sup>4</sup>

That there had to be some similarities between the French and Russian revolutions should have been taken into consideration by critics, for the Bolshevik leaders had studied the techniques of the French Revolution and had utilized these same techniques with some modifications. In a sense, Lenin and Robespierre, and later Stalin and Napoleon can be compared since their rôles had something in common. The end of the period of War Communism in the Soviet Union could be construed as the Russian Thermidor if one wanted to carry out this analogy. Perhaps it was because the Soviet critics did see the similarities that they attacked the book so bitterly on ideological grounds, for one often hates a replica of oneself much more than one would hate something completely different.

Alfred Cobban shows in his treatise, *Dictatorship*, that dictatorships evolve according to definite patterns and that, therefore, it is not surprising that the French and Russian revolutions are so similar, at least, on the surface. For example, Cobban's statement that each leader who is first brought to power with the aid of some particular group must in time disassociate himself from that group, must be considered valid.<sup>5</sup> Robespierre was ready to sacrifice his friends of a few months back, but did not succeed. Today we know that of the original controlling group of Bolsheviks, Stalin alone remains.

Crane Brinton, in his studies of revolution, has found that the real aim of revolutions is the creation of a heaven on earth,—that a revolution is in many ways like a church in that it tries to dictate

<sup>4</sup>Mark Aldanov, *Ninth of Thermidor*, Berlin, 1923, p. 341.

<sup>5</sup>Alfred Cobban, *Dictatorship: Its History and Theory*, 1939, pp. 265-270.

behavior.<sup>6</sup> There is an attempt at the realization of a program in the moral sense, such as the Republic of Virtue in France under Robespierre. There can be no question about the fact that Soviet leadership is still deeply concerned with the problem of controlling behavior.

Soviet critics attacked *Devil's Bridge* on much the same grounds as they used against *The Ninth of Thermidor*. D. Gorbov claimed that Aldanov was flaunting the power of the British fleet and that behind all of this lay the hope that perhaps the British fleet would attack the Soviet Union. Gorbov also took offense at the fact that Cardinal Ruffo had made an agreement with the Republicans when he should simply have annihilated the group. According to Gorbov, Aldanov went to great pains to bring out this factor because he wanted to show that Christians could be expected to show mercy even though mercy at such a time was not in keeping with the usual methods employed in war.<sup>7</sup>

Those who wish can find in *Conspiracy* the material which could be interpreted as being anti-Soviet propaganda. Pierre Lamort, in a talk before the Masons at the home of Talyzin, tells how Napoleon has given the people of France economic freedom, but has taken away from them the other freedoms, such as the freedom of speech and of universal suffrage. Pierre goes on to say how all of these losses will be replaced by such things as medals, orders, ranks, and citations, that is, by anything that will bolster a man's vanity. The people at the meeting object violently to this sort of thing and express the opinion that such measures, if they were practiced in Russia, would be disastrous to the country. Whether or not Aldanov meant by these remarks to scourge the Soviet government is impossible to ascertain because the characters acted in their rôles just as one would expect the Russian noblemen of the time to do when confronted with such statements.

In view of these facts, it seems unwise to condemn Aldanov for the political message which the reader might find in his novels, even though Aldanov may have been somewhat prejudiced and may have injected his prejudice unconsciously into his works. After all, the artist is not a robot that sorts out facts, but rather an integrating agent who digests facts and brings them to the reader in some meaningful form. It may be that Aldanov wrote with the idea of understanding the present through a study of the past, whether

<sup>6</sup>Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, 1938, pp. 220-236.

<sup>7</sup>D. Gorbov, *Krasnaya Nov*, July 1926, pp. 240-241.

he himself was aware of it or not. Perhaps, in a rough way, Aldanov was trying to clarify some of the points that Alfred Cobban so clearly demonstrates in his study, *Dictatorship*. In any case, Aldanov cannot be accused of distorting historical facts. He is sincere and truthful in what he has to say.

In their attempts to disqualify Aldanov, the Soviet critics missed completely the real theme of the book. Like Merezhkovsky, Aldanov wanted to teach something through his works, something deep, true and universal, and it was for this reason that he incorporated into his novels the pessimistic philosophy of history which overshadows everything. As James Gray points out in a recent essay:

Completely and unapologetically a doubter is Mark Aldanov. His cultivated and sophisticated mind has dealt with the problem of man's ability to plan a better destiny and has calmly come to the conclusion that there is little health in the race's collective mind, little hope for its great plans.\*

The real protagonists of this philosophy are Robespierre, Barataev, and Napoleon, all of whom tried to control destiny but were unsuccessful. Robespierre failed to maintain his Republic of Virtue in spite of all his efforts. Barataev, the real moving spirit of *Devil's Bridge* and of *Conspiracy*, the alchemist who searched for the elixir of life, found out that in reality what he thought to be the elixir of life was the elixir of death which was sending him on to a new life, i.e., to a life after death. As Pierre Lamort put it, Barataev was, after all, an unsuccessful Descartes. Napoleon had tried to control the world, but while on St. Helena he realized that there were millions of people like Toby, the Malayan gardener, who knew nothing about his greatness. In his last hours Napoleon remembered the day of his coronation and there came to his mind the picture of the Devil-Thinker atop the cathedral of Notre Dame. Only then did the truth seem to have occurred to him.

How vanity affects men's actions is clearly shown by Aldanov's characterizations of Catherine the Great, Bezborodko, and Suvorov. Bezborodko was on his last legs, so to speak, but still he made every effort to increase his political stature in the eyes of Emperor Paul I. Suvorov crossed the Alps because he wanted to be like Hannibal and he sacrificed needlessly a large number of men in his battle with Joubert simply because he wanted to show that he could defeat

\*James Gray, "We Walk in Anguish," *On Second Thought*, University of Minnesota Press, 1946. p. 240.

Joubert with only a portion of his forces. Thus the irony of destiny and the vanity of man are the two threads which entwine and interweave Aldanov's works. Men live, struggle, and die, but the Devil-Thinker remains throughout eternity watching man's feeble efforts to control his own destiny.

### III

Aldanov's style of writing and some of the ideas expressed by his characters indicate that Aldanov has been influenced by the writings of Anatole France. This is particularly evident from the rather pretentious prologue used in *The Ninth of Thermidor*. Clifton P. Fadiman found something strictly non-Russian about Aldanov's works and suggested that the organization of the historical episodes with neat and balanced precision was more French than Russian.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Aldanov treats Staal, his Byronic hero, with an irony, which if it were not deficient in depth and humanity, would recall the manner of Anatole France. Lawrence S. Morris points out that Aldanov has developed one of Anatole France's themes—the idea that the passion, stupidities, and ambitions of the actors determined the crises of these heroic days as inevitably as they ensnare the most obscure and least conscious of our lives. Mr. Morris makes the observation, however, that Aldanov is somewhat lacking in insight.<sup>10</sup>

Sooner or later every Russian historical novelist is fated to be compared with Tolstoy and his *War and Peace*. Of the three great literary figures of the nineteenth century, Tolstoy stands much closer to Aldanov than do either Turgenev or Dostoevsky. Vladimir Pozner thinks that Aldanov constructs his historical novels in much the same way as did Tolstoy, that Aldanov discovers in past epochs and in the lives of historical personages those traits which connect them with all epochs, and especially with ours.<sup>11</sup> Lawrence S. Morris finds some similarities, but decides that Tolstoy's characters, both historical and fictional, are people "in the round" with the exception of Napoleon who is a bit artificial. On the other hand, he feels that Aldanov's characters do not mingle, that they are really not lifelike.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Clifton Fadiman, *Bookman*, January, 1929, Vol. 68, p. 588.

<sup>10</sup>Lawrence S. Morris, *Saturday Review of Literature*, October 2, 1926, Vol. 3, p. 153.

<sup>11</sup>Vladimir Pozner, *Panorama de la littérature russe contemporaine*, 1929, p. 355.

<sup>12</sup>Morris, *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

The Russian historian A. Kizevetter, however, claims that any similarity there may be in the works of Aldanov and of Tolstoy is purely superficial, for each author approaches the historical novel in a different way. Tolstoy is not very much concerned with historical accuracy whether in the depiction of separate historical figures or in the depiction of the general trend of historical events. Kizevetter feels that Tolstoy's descriptions of the epoch of 1812 are not in keeping with actuality because for Tolstoy the picture of the patriotic life was necessary only to illustrate the basic theme of the novel, namely, the naturalness of the process of life. Such characters as Speransky and Kutuzov, according to Kizevetter, were not fairly presented by Tolstoy, and if the reader today accepts this version as the real one, then this is merely a sign of Tolstoy's great artistic genius. However, he goes on to say that all of this does not mean that Tolstoy did not remain true to historical fact because of his inability to do so but rather, that he did not want to adhere to historical truth since it would not fit in with his general plan.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, Aldanov's general trend of presentation of history, his characters, and every last detail are true, claims the critic. Of course, to further his artistic aims the author had to make a selection, but all of the selected episodes are pictured most accurately. Kizevetter maintains that all of Aldanov's facts were derived from careful study of historical documents which entailed extensive critical research. But Aldanov does not merely wish to portray history; he utilizes historical material as an artistic medium which is closely tied up with his philosophy of history.<sup>14</sup>

Kizevetter has neglected to mention the fact that a large portion of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* was devoted to Tolstoy's philosophy of history, and it is here, in the realm of ideas that the great similarity exists between Tolstoy and Aldanov. Aldanov's views on war and revolution closely correspond to Tolstoy's version. In his style, Aldanov does utilize a wide scope, and he does write about war, but whereas Tolstoy's characters are primarily fictional, Aldanov's characters are primarily historical figures whose lives and actions can be checked by historical documents. One is inclined to agree with Kizevetter that Aldanov, as a historical novelist, outdoes Tolstoy, but must give way on the score of artistic genius.

<sup>13</sup>A. Kizevetter, *Sovremennye Zapiski*, Paris, 1926 Vol. XXVIII, pp. 476-77.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 478.

## IV

Aldanov wrote his novels on the basis of most extensive critical research. The sources for the historical and social parts of *The Thinker* (according to Aldanov's own statements in his introduction to *The Ninth of Thermidor*) were taken from material found in state libraries in France, and from many private collections. The most minute details are based on fact. For example, in the description of the battle on Devil's Bridge, the fact that Prince Meschhersky was the first to get across an improvised bridge and the fact that the soldier who followed him slipped and fell into the gorge are recorded just as they are given in well documented biographies of Suvorov.<sup>15</sup>

Even when Aldanov invents a situation, it may very well be based on some historical fact. Although it may seem fantastic to us that Staal was chosen by Zorich as a candidate for the position of official lover at the court, there is a record of the fact that Gregory Orlov had tried to maneuver the seventeen-year-old son of Princess Dashkov into this very position.<sup>16</sup>

When Aldanov is not completely sure of facts, he exercises extreme restraint. For example, instead of presenting the reader with either one or the other version of the shooting of Robespierre, the author presents us with the accomplished fact, and then has various theories propounded by outsiders in a discussion amongst themselves. This restraint is perhaps demonstrated even better with respect to the actual murder of Emperor Paul I. All historians agree that Paul was strangled with a scarf, but there is some question as to whose scarf it was. Leonid I. Strakhovsky maintains that the scarf belonged to Paul,<sup>17</sup> K. Waliszewski writes that the scarf belonged either to Paul or to one of the conspirators,<sup>18</sup> George Fowler claims that Nikolay Zubov used his own sash,<sup>19</sup> whereas Waclaw Gasiorowski claims that Platon and Valerian Zubov tied their scarves together and did the job.<sup>20</sup> Considerable discrepancy is also to be noted with respect to the actual person or persons who killed Paul. In the face of this conflicting evidence, Aldanov chose only those details which are accepted by all. Later in the story, he has a character, Ivanchuk, mention the fact that rumor has it that

<sup>15</sup>W. Lyon Bleasie, *Suvorov*, London, 1920, pp. 314-16; K. Osipov, *Alexander Suvorov, a Biography*, London, 1941, p. 167.

<sup>16</sup>Katherine Anthony, *Catherine the Great*, 1925, p. 302.

<sup>17</sup>Leonid Strakhovsky, *Alexander I of Russia*, 1947, p. 23.

<sup>18</sup>K. Waliszewski, *Paul the First of Russia*, 1913, p. 454.

<sup>19</sup>George Fowler, *Lives of the Sovereigns of Russia*, 1858, Vol. II, p. 327.

<sup>20</sup>Waclaw Gasiorowski, *Tragic Russia*, 1908, p. 97.

Nikolay Zubov and Skaryatin had strangled Paul with Skaryatin's scarf.

The inclusion of current discussions of the times is just the thing necessary to help the reader peg down certain phases of history in his mind and to orient himself with respect to world history. For example, in *The Ninth of Thermidor*, Radishchev and his famous book, *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, Fyodor Vasilevich Rostopchin, Prince Prozorovsky, the poet Derzhavin, and the free mason Novikov are brought into the background to indicate the cultural and intellectual milieu of the time. In England the reader is allowed to hear such leading political figures as William Pitt, Edmund Burke, and J. B. Priestly. The entire book is, however, overshadowed by the discussion of Rousseau, his theory of sovereignty and of the social contract. Against this theoretical background, the actual developments are shown by contrast.

Only one historical inaccuracy was noted and that was of a minor character. In *St. Helena*, Aldanov has made the mistake of marrying off De Balmain to Susana Johnson when, according to the island records, he had married Susana's sister.<sup>21</sup>

Vladimir Pozner rightly remarks that Aldanov in his best moments comes close to giving a living synthesis of history and fiction.<sup>22</sup> Another writer says that Aldanov is the master of the contemporary Russian historical novel and that his works surpass those of Merezhkovsky.<sup>23</sup> D. S. Mirsky is of the same opinion, for he prefers the simplicity and lucidity of Aldanov to the overpretentious erudition of Merezhkovsky.<sup>24</sup>

To conclude, Aldanov's novels have the quality of being both readable fiction and an accurate guide to history. The reader who is unaware of the fact that the characters of the books are historical personages can, nevertheless, enjoy the breadth and scope of Aldanov's work and can absorb the universal truths that Aldanov so ably demonstrates. The person who has delved into European history will find in Aldanov's novels a lucid and dramatic portrayal of historical events and persons. Contrary to the tenet that people who want to study history should not read novels to do so, Aldanov's tetralogy, *The Thinker*, presents the opportunity to acquire quite painlessly a detailed and accurate account of European history from 1793 to 1821.

<sup>21</sup>Literary Review of the N. Y. Evening Post, August, 9, 1924, p. 953; Alexandre Antonovich Balmain, *Napoleon in Captivity*, translated by Julian Park, 1927, p. xvi.

<sup>22</sup>Pozner, *Op. cit.*, p. 356.

<sup>23</sup>Nicholas von Arseniew, *Die Russische Literatur der Neuzeit und Gegenwart*, 1929, p. 352.

<sup>24</sup>D. S. Mirsky, *Contemporary Russian Literature*, 1926, p. 302.

## Book Reviews

SHUB, DAVID. *Lenin*. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday. 1948. 438 pp. \$5.00.

It is noteworthy that David Shub, like Souvarine and the present reviewer, has seen fit to give his history of the Bolshevik Party and its seizure of power a biographical form. Biographical history, one of the most ancient historical forms, fell out of fashion in the mass-man and impersonal-force historiography of the nineteenth century, but today it is experiencing a revival. And this is natural. If in periods of stability and "legitimacy" the man in the post of eminence seems little more than a symbol or an accidental and easily replaceable variant, today when ancient structures crumble and new régimes, new power centers and new orders are created, the personality of their creators takes on once more a primary importance. Who can doubt that Hitler set his stamp upon the Fourth Reich; Mussolini, on his New Rome; Gandhi, on his India? As a study of Robespierre and Napoleon is now recognized as essential to an understanding of Jacobinism and Bonapartism, so Bolshevism (Leninism and the later Stalinism) is incomprehensible without an examination of the central personages and creators. Thus, Shub's *Lenin* goes far beyond the scope of a biography: it is a key to the Bolshevik Party, the seizure of power in 1917, the rise of the Comintern, and the Soviet régime. It makes clear that without Lenin there would have been no Bolshevism, no *coup d'état*, no Brest-Litovsk treaty, no N.E.P. retreat, no Comintern, no Stalinism.

On this last point, however, it raises doubts rather than resolves them. The relations between Lenin and Stalin involve the integration of two differing and fluctuating magnitudes, namely: to what extent does Leninism represent a preparation for Stalinism, as proved by continuities and by Stalin's success in using Lenin's machine for his purposes? and to what extent does Stalinism represent a break with Leninism, as proved by Stalin's attacks on *uravnivokva* (equalitarianism), on "the withering away of the State," and other Leninist programmatic goals, and his physical extermination of all of Lenin's close associates? As Trotsky's *Stalin* tended to make his relation to Lenin entirely one of discontinuity, Lenin serving him as a club with which to belabor Stalin, so Shub makes the relationship virtually all continuity, with Stalin nothing but Lenin twenty years later. The integration of the two dissimilar magnitudes seems to this reviewer to be more complicated than either of these one-sided formulae. But the matter is only marginal to Shub's biography of Lenin, which stops with Lenin's death, and, within its self-chosen limits, is a very good piece of political analysis indeed.

In connection with Lenin's biography, and still more with that of all of his associates, the historian is faced with enormous difficulties in trying to restore the original outlines of fact and truth. Sources have a way of disappearing overnight; yesterday's official truth becomes today's inimical anti-state

falsehood; history is edited and re-edited every few years by aid of all the resources of a total state; biography is buried under swiftly accumulating piles of hagiography or vilification, or sunk so deep (as in the case of Trotsky's rôle in the Red Army) that there are no longer any traces of it. On the whole, Mr. Shub has acquitted himself remarkably well in the task of excavation and restoration of the original outlines of the already buried "ancient" truth. Himself an actor in the drama of the Russian revolutionary movement, the author is thoroughly acquainted with the source material, has made good use of the periodicals, newspapers, and books of an earlier day, has harvested the truth of the defeated and dispersed as well as the victorious, has utilized emigré as well as yesterday's purged and today's current material.

Unfortunately, Mr. Shub has not attempted to evaluate for his readers or himself the comparative reliability of earlier and later memoirs, of exiles' accounts and official accounts. He seems rather to pick and choose according to his instincts as to what will make an effective story or suit his over-all conception of Lenin. Too often this leads him to accept doubtful stories (Alexinsky's on Elizabeth K's romance with Lenin), or secondary accounts in cases where deeper digging into Lenin's works might tell a different story. The most notable case of error of this sort has for its "victim" Plekhanov, who is erroneously said to have "omitted the dictatorship of the proletariat" from his Draft Program until Lenin forced him to put it in. An examination of Plekhanov's original draft, available in Lenin's *Collected Works*,

Vol. V, would have convinced Mr. Shub of the apocryphal nature of this legend. Instead of setting successive versions of the same account side by side for his reader or for himself and then collating them in order to extract their true outlines, he tends to document particular statements by lumping together citations from the most disparate sources, connecting them not by means of a critical evaluation but by a non-committal and uninformative series of *also's*.

In general, the reliability of Leniniana varies inversely with the lateness of the date. The memories of exiles and victims are subject to possible discount for retroactive dislike and misunderstanding, a case in point being the memories of Vodovozov to the effect that Lenin rejoiced at the famine of 1891 because it would make revolutionists. And the memories of adulators are subject to discount for retroactive enlargement, particularly after GPU Chief Beria had assumed the task of editing men's memories. A case in point, to take one of several accepted by Shub, is the anecdote which makes the sixteen-year old Vladimir Ilyich say of his older brother: "Alexander will never make a revolutionist, he spends too much time studying annelid worms." Mr. Shub admits several such hagiographical anecdotes from later Soviet sources, though they are inherently improbable on the face of them, since Vladimir did not get interested in revolution for several more years and no one in the respectable Ulyanov family would have been likely to think of making such a remark. Both these enlargements of Lenin's precocity, and the Vodovozov anecdote, have been sub-

jected to very convincing criticism by Leon Trotsky in his *Youth of Lenin*, a work which Mr. Shub does not appear to have utilized.

However, these strictures on Mr. Shub's use of his sources are not intended to call in question the major outlines of his picture of Lenin, or of Bolshevism, or of the Soviet régime in its early years. On the contrary, the criticism is made, so to speak at retail, while the reviewer's admiration for Mr. Shub's total picture is at wholesale. He has done an exceptionally good job with the crucial years of the First World War and 1917. And he has produced what is to date the best, most complete, and most rounded biography of Lenin as man, as father of Bolshevism, and as founder of the Soviet State.

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MAGIDOFF, ROBERT. *In Anger and Pity*. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday. 1949. 278 pp. \$2.95.

In the summer of 1935 there arrived in Moscow a young, Russian-born, American citizen who was "starry-eyed about the land of the Soviets. . . . sold on the legend of the Great Soviet Utopia," but not a Communist. Thirteen years later this same man—by that time a well-known press and radio correspondent—was denounced in *Izvestia* as a spy and immediately ordered to leave the U.S.S.R. *In Anger and Pity* opens with an account of Mr. Magidoff's expulsion, tells something of his life in Russia and something, also, of the Soviet ways as he observed them. It

should be noted that his opportunities for observation were not only prolonged but also unusually good in other respects. The language was no barrier since it was his mother tongue, and his marriage to a Soviet citizen considerably aided his understanding of what he heard and saw.

The subject matter of the book is varied. Four brief chapters and an appendix are devoted mainly to the account of Magidoff's denunciation and expulsion. One section deals with Soviet censorship, with what might well be called the Soviet's spy hysteria, and with samples of Soviet xenophobia and nationalism. Life and manners in general, including an entertaining section entitled "Emily Post invades Russia," and biographical anecdotes ("Some Russians I Knew") take up more than a third of the pages. Perhaps the most interesting parts for the specialist are those in which Mr. Magidoff discusses Soviet arts and letters. He presents some new material here and, also, brings together in a very convenient and readable form items which have hitherto been available only in scattered sources. Finally, Mr. Magidoff offers brief answers to questions about the possibilities of war and peace; the nature of the Soviet government; and the living standards of the Soviet people.

He expects that Soviet living standards will not reach pre-war Soviet levels before 1950 due to the government's intensive drive for the production of producer rather than consumer goods. The currency reform of December, 1947, resulted, he says, in a real improvement in living standards because of the increased purchasing power of the ruble. Russians even today can-

not afford "very much more than essential food and housing" but matters are improving. Every Russian now "has enough to eat, even if he is not well fed," but at least until 1960, "the Soviet citizen will do without most of the amenities which he has never had anyway."

The government he describes not as a personal dictatorship but as a "dictatorship by a political party which adheres to sets of social, political, and economic theories and follows a vast and complicated program." The Party's members have power and responsibility and frequently enjoy "attractive amenities," but they may not have any personal opinions. These must be subordinated to the Party line. "Social thought, art, science—all must reflect official Communist ideology." The instruments of government, the Red Army, and the "secret service" are "but arms of the Communist Party, the real dictator of the Soviet Union." He does not anticipate any startling political changes when Stalin dies, but does suggest that there may be a slow emergence of new leaders. His guess as Stalin's successor is Bulganin.

As to war, Mr. Magidoff says flatly, "I think no nation in the world detests the thought of another war more than Russia. . . . The Russian people have a deep-rooted aversion to war—even a victorious one. . . . It is my deepest conviction that the Kremlin also does not seek war now or at any time in the foreseeable future. . . . I believe that the Soviet Union will stop short of war on any issue." These heartening conclusions are based on three points: (1) popular Russian opposition to war; (2) the comparative low Russian war potential; and (3) the Communist belief that

time is on their side. His supporting arguments are well, though briefly, put.

The Kremlin, however, does not want real peace, says Magidoff. The chief desideratum is time; the secondary desideratum is the continuance of turmoil and confusion. Meantime, the Soviet "is preparing to meet any military contingency, particularly in a belief that the capitalist world led by the United States will attack the U.S.S.R. sooner or later. . . ." The United States must also be prepared and must, moreover, win the cold war. We can do so, he thinks, if we take constructive action at home and abroad to remove the social evils upon which Communism thrives. Truth and time, concludes Mr. Magidoff, are on our side and we also have effective implements in the Marshall Plan and the Voice of America.

Some will certainly feel that Mr. Magidoff is unduly sanguine in his estimates of the hope for peace. Others may object that *In Anger and Pity* gives an incomplete and therefore misleading picture of life in the U.S.S.R. But, on the other hand, Mr. Magidoff writes with care and moderation and his long experience entitles his views to a careful hearing, though not necessarily to agreement.

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MARGOLD, STELLA K. *Let's Do Business with Russia*. New York, Harper and Brothers. 1948. 244 pp. \$3.50.

In the preface to her book, Mrs. Margold states that she was asked "to present a list of studies which

would be valuable for a better understanding between the U.S.S.R. and the United States" and that "the study which appeared most worthwhile was the importance of trade between the United States and the Soviet Union and the need for knowledge among American businessmen of how to proceed to get this trade."

The book is an eloquent plea for the expansion of trade with the Soviet Union and is based, presumably, on a deep sympathy for the Russian people and not on cold economic and political facts. Mrs. Margold does a good job with the latter part of her objective, that is, the need for knowing how to proceed to get the Russian trade. Thus, the intricacies of the operations of the Soviet monopoly of foreign trade are described and the businessman is told in detail how to go about to get orders from the Soviet government and, from that point of view, it will probably be useful to him.

But the book certainly fails in its purpose of bringing a better understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union. It fails because Mrs. Margold does not even mention the causes for the past and present profound rift between the two countries and the important economic and political differences which have marred the relations between them. According to her, the small volume of trade is accounted for by "press campaigns" and "witch hunts" in this country and by our unwillingness to grant loans to the U.S.S.R.

With respect to the importance of trade between the two countries, the author is correct in saying that the trade of the United States with the Soviet Union is important, but the fact is that it is much more im-

portant to the U.S.S.R. than to the United States. The Soviet Union generally sold from 4 to 5 per cent of her exports to the United States before 1940 and purchased from 20 to 28 per cent of her total imports from the United States during the same period. From the point of view of the United States, however, this trade has never amounted to more than 2 or 3 per cent of the total trade of the United States, except during the last war when most of the Russian imports were given free under Lend-Lease. The statement, on page 11, that "trade with the Soviet Union can mean economic prosperity without major depression" simply ignores the economic facts, unless Mrs. Margold is suggesting that the United States subsidize exports to the Soviet Union to the tune of some \$5 to \$8 billions annually.

Mrs. Margold is pretty optimistic about the ability and willingness of the Russians to buy goods and to pay for them, though, time and again, she tries to prove the necessity of granting a loan to the U.S.S.R. in order to expand the trade between the two countries. As a matter of fact, in the Spring of 1946, the U.S. Department of State announced that the United States was willing to consider a \$1 billion loan under certain conditions.

The author pleads for the Russian people and says on pages 1 and 2 that "the Soviet government wishes to give its people some of the comfort enjoyed by Western civilization. To accomplish this, an unlimited home market is waiting to be supplied by foreign firms over and above what the Soviet Union can herself produce." But the fact is that, until now, the Soviet government,

itself, has been paying little attention to the comforts and needs of the Russian people. Since 1928, all the efforts of the Soviet citizens have been directed toward the building and development of economic self-sufficiency and of the military might of the country at the expense of the development of industries producing consumers' goods. Soviet statistics of imports clearly indicate that the Soviet government has been importing machinery and strategic raw materials and not consumers' goods, in spite of the acute need for this type of goods. One must always keep in mind, when considering the problems of Soviet foreign trade, that the Soviet international trade depends upon the political aims of the Soviet rulers and not on the needs of the Soviet consumers.

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DURANTY, WALTER. *Stalin & Co.*  
N. Y., Sloane. 1949. 261 pp.  
\$3.00.

In the Western World, the rise of political leaders is usually a long drawn-out affair and foreign observers cannot help but notice the coming stars. In the U.S.S.R. many prominent figures around Stalin seem to have appeared from nowhere and disappeared in a more or less similar fashion.

Many Americans are eager to know the men who run Russia and Duranty's book is intended to satisfy this quest. But the author's material is hardly richer than that at the disposal of any student of

Russian affairs having access to the *Soviet Encyclopedia*, except that it is sprinkled with personal reminiscences of respectable vintage.

Originally, the Congress of the All-Union Communist Party elected the permanent organization composed of the Politburo, Orgburo, the Secretariat and the Control Commission. In the early thirties, these functions were transferred to the Central Committee of the Party consisting of 70 members and 70 alternates, and meeting three times a year. Theoretically, the Central Committee is the supreme authority with an executive branch known as the Secretariat (Stalin, Andreev, Malenkov) and a steering committee—the Politburo. According to Duranty, Radek considered the Politburo the "apex of the Party pyramid" in 1921. Recently, people as well informed as Churchill also placed the burden of responsibility on the 13 members (including alternates) of the Politburo, forgetting that on some occasions members of this supreme organization were expelled when the Central Committee was not in session. Duranty's book avoids analyzing the structural interrelations or throwing any light on the inner functioning of the Party mechanism.

After fifteen years in Moscow as an American correspondent, Duranty should at least know that neither Mikoyan nor Stalin studied in seminaries because they contemplated the priesthood, but because these institutions taught in their native languages (Armenian and Georgian) and did not charge tuition and board, which was not the case in regular high schools.

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DOSTOEVSKY, F. M. *The Diary of a Writer*. Translated and annotated by Boris Brasol. Two vols., N. Y., Charles Scribner's Sons. 1949. 1097 pp. \$12.50.

For a long time the English-reading public was deprived of one of the most important human and literary documents of the nineteenth century, because *The Diary of a Writer* by Dostoevsky remained untranslated except in parts. Now this fundamental work for the understanding of one of the greatest writers of all times has been rendered into English in a brilliant and impeccable translation by Mr. Boris Brasol, the author, whose previous translations of Russian poetry and especially that of Pushkin have created for him a deserved reputation of a fine stylist and a master of the English language. Both the publisher and the translator deserve the highest praise for making this work accessible to the English-reading public.

*The Diary* is a unique document. "Evading every established literary pattern (novel, satire, drama, reminiscences, essay, fable, etc.), it is a bold attempt on the part of a man of genius to enter into an informal colloquy with his readers, critics, and correspondents," as Mr. Brasol states in his Preface. But it is even more than that. It is a reflection of the burning social, political, religious, and economic questions of the 1870's in Russia mirrored by an extremely sensitive and introspective writer who kept in direct touch with these questions not only by following the publications of the time, but also by carrying on a vast and fruitful correspondence with many of his readers from all over Russia. Yet, of course, it is a personal journal, as Dostoevsky said

himself: "I am writing a *Diary*, i.e., I am recording my impressions apropos of everything that strikes me most in current events" (p. 779). And as such it gives a deep insight into Dostoevsky's own mind and soul.

In many instances Dostoevsky expresses opinions that may be termed conservative, if not outright reactionary, yet he could not be classed as a true conservative of the type of Katkov or Pobedonostsev. On other occasions, Dostoevsky speaks as an ultra-nationalist, but again his nationalism is of a kind different from that of his contemporaries, forerunners, or followers, who wanted the expansion of Russia and the establishment of Russian domination over Constantinople. Dostoevsky called himself "a Christian socialist," but he was probably closer to a theocrat who believed in Russia's religious mission rather than in her political expansion.

It is impossible even to touch upon all the important problems raised by *The Diary* in a brief review. Suffice it to say that this work will not only give enchanting and thought-provoking hours to any intelligent reader, but will also undoubtedly provide many new interpretations of Dostoevsky—the man, the writer, and the thinker—and of his times for students of Russia and things Russian.

The only disappointing part of this work are the notes. One may doubt the wisdom of devoting a column and a half to the identification of Khlestakov and of omitting the identification of "one of our writers most beloved by me" (p. 783). Furthermore, this reviewer would question the reference to the Berlin Congress of 1878 as the Berlin Conference, or the transla-

tion of *Otechestvennyia Zapiski* as the Domestic Records. Finally, a more careful proof-reading would have eliminated a number of misprints in the "Table of Contents" and the listing of the writer Grigorovich as Apollon Alexandrovich (p. 1055) instead of Dmitry Vasilevich, as he appears correctly on p. 1064. However, these slight blemishes do not mar the over-all value of this very important book.

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KLUGE, ERNFRIED EDUARD. *Die russische revolutionäre Presse in der zweiten Hälfte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, 1855-1905*. Zürich, Artemis Verlag. 1948. 206 pp. Sfrs. 11.

Kluge's little book on the Russian revolutionary press is worthy of scholarly attention; indeed, it may become a most valuable bibliographical guide for all students of Russian history, social movements, and journalism.

The author gives a survey for the years 1855 to 1905 of as many revolutionary newspapers and periodicals as he was able to find—an undertaking in which he has had the advantage of living in Switzerland, refuge of so many Russian revolutionary workers. He makes no pretensions as to the completeness of his compilation; yet, he lists

sixty-three items and describes even more. Included are some publications which never saw more than one issue and which may be considered pamphlets rather than newspapers.

Most of the publications are discussed individually; their editors are named, their duration is indicated, their philosophy and contents are succinctly described, and the reasons for their appearance and eventual decline and disappearance are given and set in relation to the revolutionary attitudes and ambitions of their authors. Kluge also comments on the fight of the Russian government against the revolutionary press and discusses briefly general problems of censorship and resulting indirect social criticism, which was exercised under the guise of aesthetic literary activity. Very pertinently he observes the importance of oral propaganda (e.g. through the *Narodnichestvo*) as a substitute for a revolutionary press among a largely illiterate population.

Kluge justly points out that most authors in the field of Russian history have neglected to use to full advantage the information which can be derived from the revolutionary press; the reviewer has no doubt that the book will contribute to the overcoming of this weakness. Some time in the near future, Kluge expects to publish a complete survey of the Russian press as a whole.

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